BV 4255
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XXX III.

U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT

A

WORD TO COMMANDERS:

BEING A DISCOURSE

PREACHED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY,

June 11th, 1843.

ADDRESSED

TO THE GRADUATING CLASS,

and published at their request

By M. P. PARKS,

CHAPLAIN AND PROFESSOR OF ETHICS.

NEW-YORK.
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U. S. Military Academy,
West Point, N. Y. June 12, 1843.

Dear Sir:—

We, the undersigned, in behalf of the 1st Class, of the U. S. Corps of Cadets, have the honor to request of you, for publication, a copy of the excellent and very appropriate discourse, delivered by you on Sunday the 11th inst.

Gratifying as is the performance of this duty, we confidently hope to experience the additional gratification of communicating to the Class, your compliance with their wishes.

We have the honor to be, dear sir,
very respectfully your ob't. serv'ts

C. COLON AUGUR,
W. B. FRANKLIN,
JAS. A. HARDIE.

To
REV. M. P. PARKS.
Chaplain & Prof'r. of Ethics,
U. S. Military Academy.

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U. S. Military Academy,
16*th June*, 1843.

Gentlemen:—

The discourse, which in the name of the Graduating Class, you have requested for publication, is herewith submitted.

It is perhaps due to the Institution, with which we are connected, if not to myself, to state that it was thrown off in one morning, with very little premeditation, and as fast as my amanuensis could write. As a composition, therefore, it has no merit, for I have not been able to correct it, and now, there is no time. Believing, however, that it does contain some wholesome advice, by pondering which, you may become wiser men, and better soldiers, I have thought it best not to withhold it.

I beg you to assure the 1st Class of my lasting regards.

That you and they, may always be found on the side of right, "the faithful soldiers and servants of Jesus Christ," is my earnest prayer.

Believe me truly yours,

M: P. PARKS.

Exodus XXIII, 9.—"Thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."

This precept is founded upon one of the most universal laws of human nature: it is this—identity in the outward circumstances of our being—is the most effectual means of awakening sympathy for those *like* situated. If we would feel for others, as becomes us, as men, and as christians, we must place ourselves in their circumstances. We must occupy a position from whence we can view objects as they view them—we must become subject to the same restraints, feel the burden of the same obligations; know, by actual experience, their trials. "Ye know the heart of a stranger, for *ye* were *strangers* in the land of Egypt." Ye have not merely seen strangers—beheld with your eyes their silence and desolation, their pining for want of sympathy, but ye yourselves have *been* strangers, and known the *heart* of a stranger—your own hearts were at one time, the hearts of strangers—ye know therefore their *solicitude*, arising from a consciousness, that the props which nature had set up about them, have been removed. You therefore may, with reason be enjoined, not to oppress a stranger—you

know the grievousness of it—oppression from *your* hand, should it light upon such as you yourselves have been, would be especially criminal.

It would not, as I conceive, be unworthy of this occasion, were I to follow up this thought, and insist upon the duty of showing compassion to the strangers who at this period* of the year are thrown upon you, and whose friendless and inexperienced condition calls loudly for sympathy and virtuous counsel. Ye yourselves, were once such as these—oppressed with their feeling of loneliness, care and anxiety, in view of the task which you were about to undertake. You can recollect, how very grateful to your heart would then have been, the slightest expression of sympathy, the briefest word of advice and encouragement, founded upon the experience of a virtuous course of living on the part of those who had passed the more rugged parts of the road upon which you were entering. "Go thou and do likewise." And with this single admonition, suffer me to draw your attention to another topic, suggested by the text, and not inappropriate, I would feign hope, to the occasion.

The precept in the text is founded, we have said, upon that universal law of human nature, which recognises the value, I might almost say, *necessity*, of identity in outward condition, in order that we may feel that sympathy for others without which, we can never influence them for their good. Behold how this law was respected and consecrated, by the incarnation of the son of God. "He took not on him the nature of *angels* but the seed of *Abraham*,"—"he was made *under* the law,"

* The time when a new class, consisting ordinarily of 100, or 120, is admitted.

subject to the law, "that he might redeem them that were *under* the law." It behoved him to be made *like* unto his brethren. Otherwise it had been impossible for him to become a *merciful*, as well as faithful high priest for man. He *knew* human nature by becoming *human*. Hence he is able to succour them that are tempted, having himself been tempted at *all* points like as we are, yet without sin.

This fact of human nature, viz: the effect of sameness in outward condition, in awakening sympathy for those whom we would influence, suggests to my mind several topics, which, with *great* deference, I would impress upon the minds of those among you, who are about to pass from a condition of subjection to one of authority. I say, with great deference; because although I know, that when duty is the question, "the pulpit is above the throne," yet the topics upon which it is proposed now briefly to remark, are so foreign to the ordinary scope of pulpit instruction, that I assume not to speak ex-cathedra, but to offer my opinion, merely.

One of the most valuable elements of that discipline, to which both mind and body has been subjected during the period of your connection with this institution, will have been thrown away upon you, young gentlemen, should you ever forget, what it is to be subject, in the minutest details of every day life, to the command of your superiors. You have known, these four years past, what it is to be commanded—you have found it no light thing to be turned about at the will of another. To have your own wills superseded with as little ceremony as if you were bereft of this chief attribute of man—to be met at every

turn by resistless authority—to be overshadowed by the majesty of law, in the privacy of your own chamber—to be required to eat and drink, and sleep and rise, in conformity with an unbending rule—to be surrounded at every moment, by a visible, and uncontrollable power, which shapes its course in accordance with motives which are locked up in another's breast, regardless of the whims and caprices of those, whose *first* duty is obedience, and whose *last* duty is *obedience*, and who must either bend or break, under the will of their superiors—this you have found no light undertaking. You know the *heart* of "a man under authority"—the *heart* of a private soldier—you know the disquietude and vexation inseparable from his position—you have been *in* it. You know how much the effort of complying with the orders of your superiors would frequently have been aided, and your minds reconciled to your *duty*, could you have been admitted to an acquaintance with the secret motives, which have made these requisitions upon you. You will, however, ere long, have practical proof of that, which you can now know only in theory; viz: that the *nature of your profession* precludes, for the most part, the possibility of accompanying commands and requisitions of duty, with any explanation of the motives, whence they originate. Remember *then*, to do that which *is* possible. Let authority be graced with suavity—let commands be enforced with discretion—be so lenient as not to be too remiss, and "so minister discipline as not to forget mercy."

There is within the sphere of each one's command, room for the exercise of some measure of irresponsible power That is

to say, it is impossible, in the nature of things, that any system of regulations should be so minute, as to prescribe every word, look, and gesture, which shall accompany us in the discharge of our duty. Each is required to discharge certain well known functions, in the exercise of which he is left, necessarily, very much to his own discretion. Herein, I say, is room for the exercise of an authority, for which we cannot be held accountable—it is a space too minute for executive authority to apply law to it. Yet it is ample for the display of innumerable acts of petty tyranny. The most subordinate officer on duty, may tyrannize as effectually over his command, as the General-in-chief, and with greater impunity, since that which the former does is done in a corner, and lights upon those, too feeble and too far removed from the source of power, to seek redress.

It would be claiming for those, to whose authority you have *hitherto* been subject, an exemption from error and infirmity, which *they* would by no means claim for themselves, were I to assume, that amid the innumerable, and often perplexing details of their respective commands, they have never done you injustice—that they have never required from you more than was reasonable, nor denied you *aught* that was allowable. Supposing it, then, thus to have been. You will remember, under such circumstances, how galling submission has proved—what heart burnings have been enkindled—what bitterness of feeling it has, for a time, infused. *Let it be the care of your life*, when once invested with *like* authority, that neither indiscretion, negligence or want of spmpathy with those under your command, ever give rise to a *like* feeling, in regard to yourselves. On the

other hand, having arrived at the estate of manhood, you can readily understand that many of the causes of your boyish discontent and vexation, were imaginary—that it is *now*, "good for you, that you have borne the yoke in your youth"—that had you not been constrained in many things to which your wills were opposed, you had been ruined. Yet, during all this season of coercive measures, you still feel that it was due to you, that your feelings should have been tenderly regarded, and that every possible allowance should have been made for the indiscretion and impetuosity of youth. Let that which you have deeply felt in time *past*, be borne upon the *heart* in time to *come*. True, you are not destined to command boys, but men, men whose infirmities are many, and whose resources against temptation have too often been enfeebled, by vicious compliances. Yet are they possessed of the feelings of men; nor are they, *any* of them, altogether desperate or hopeless. They have still an object in living, and if not the *highest* and most *ennobling*, still, so long as man has any object for which he deems it worth while to live, it is *possible* so to approach that man, as to induce him to take up with a higher, and yet higher object of pursuit. And I see nothing impossible in the undertaking, were the profession which you have chosen *pledged* to a man, to the accomplishment of it, and had each a heart to *live* and *labor* for it, in his allotted sphere—I see nothing impossible in the attempt to exalt the rank and file of our army to a most *respectable*, *contented* and *useful* position in society. Let your intercourse with them and government over them, constantly tend to displace the too prevalent idea, that they are mere machines, to be

turned about by the word of command, and that the sole object for which they are taken into the service, is that they may preserve from dilapidation the lines of our national defence, keep in order the munitions of war, and if *need* require, be drawn out and disposed of as targets, to direct the fire of an invading foe; and that in all this, the highest virtue of a soldier, consists in acting as mechanically as possible; and the highest objects which he can propose to himself, are his rations, and drowsy listlessness when not on duty—let your precept and example, I say, displace this too prevalent idea, and substitute one more truthful in its stead—let them infer from all they *see* in you, and hear from you, that they are retained in service, for the most necessary and important purpose, of presenting, at all times a nucleus, about which an efficient army, may at any moment be formed—that in the mean time they are most honorably and usefully employed in preserving and strengthening those lines of defence which afford no inconsiderable guarantee of continued peace—that they constitute an important conservative element in society, presenting a quiet, but resistless front to unbridled faction; that, in a word, they are the preservers of the peace of nations, until the more perfect establishment of that kingdom which shall make an end of war by subduing all hearts to one Lord—let such ideas be steadily inculcated by precept and example, emanating from those in authority —*they* will not be slow to perceive, that there is something better for the common soldier, than to "eat, drink, and be merry," when he can—they will perceive that their profession affords ample scope for *sobriety*, *fidelity* and *intelligence*, to find their recompence. They can be induced, in great numbers, to propose to

themselves higher objects than the mere gratification of the animal propensities. Let their comfort as men be cared for—let their wants as intellectual men be supplied—let their needs as moral beings be provided for, and let such as do not repay your care by progressive improvement, be excluded from the profession as unworthy of a soldier's vocation, and rely on it, I do not miscalculate, when I say, that our army will ere long exhibit a most interesting body of men, from the least to the greatest, which the whole nation will delight to cherish as being, under God, the right arm of its defence.

It is an ancient proverb, and therefore worthy of being repeated, and one which ought especially to be impressed upon young men, that we should *despise* none, neither *despair* of any. There is in every human heart, not altogether reprobate, a chord, which when skillfully struck, will awaken generous emotions, and revive even the expiring sentiment of virtue. There is too, such a thing as "stooping to conquer" "overcoming evil with good." For who can stand the "heaping of coals of fire upon his head?" Let an officer bring near him the most incorrigible one of all his command—let words of discretion uttered in tones of kindness and accompanied with a benignant expression reflected full in his face, prove to him that "he knows how to have compassion upon the ignorant and them that are out of the way" that, he can, and does sympathize with them, even in their *unsuccessful* attempts, "to refuse the evil and choose the good"—let him repeat the effort again and again----it would be a thing to be wondered at, if he did not rescue that man from his vices.

Set before you, my young friends, the example of the Saviour of the world. Behold how purity, can stoop to confer with impurity. See in his life with what *intensity* it is possible to hate vice, and at the same moment, to have compassion upon the vicious. "Woman where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She answered, No man, Lord. Then said Jesus unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Believe me my young friends, the secret of that moral power whereby alone we can effectually influence, for their good, those under our command, is to be found in these *two* elements----intense hatred for their vices, and intense compassion for the vicious. Let this appear in all our intercourse with them----let that intercourse be frequent and clothed in the aspect of strictness and compassion, reason and equity---ourselves examples of that which we require from others, and it is incredible to what a degree of self respect and efficiency we may exalt those under our command: especially, when aided by the most perfect form of government on earth, that under which you have chosen to live.

I need not say that the exercise of a command, upon such principles, and under the influence of such motives as have been just hinted at, calls for rare qualifications, in those invested with authority. Knowledge of one's self, extended observation, self-discipline, high intellectual culture, studious habits rigorously adhered to, as being indispensable to continued mental vigour—all these are indispensable to him who would exercise his authority efficiently for the good of others. But more than extended knowledge, and mental vigour is needed. That control of our own passions, which is indispensable to a "right

judgment in all things"---that patient attention to the claims of the *least* as well as the greatest, and to those claims which not only *law*, but *equity*, and even *courtesy* require us to respect---these attributes of a virtuous commander, cannot be attained unless we realize at all times, that *we*, ourselves, are under authority, as well as in *command*—that while we are holding others accountable to us, we ourselves are far more fearfully held accountable to one, with whom is no respect of persons. This continual remembrance of God's presence, and of our nothingness in his sight, is *indispensable*, not only to the rightful exercise of authority, but as a means, also, of counteracting that most *subtle* and *inveterate* tendency of power, to corrupt its possessor. So intoxicating is this gift, so exceedingly difficult is it for us, while "saying to one man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come and he cometh;" to have lowly and just thoughts concerning ourselves---that not one in a thousand escapes, altogether, the intoxicating and poisonous effects of that precious thing, *power*.

Nor need any hope to escape, unharmed, from the exercise of so excellent an endowment, who does not fervently pray to God, through Jesus Christ, to make him "lowly in his own eyes," and teach him to "esteem others better than himself."

It may well then be conceded, that to expect you to exercise your respective commands upon such principles, and with such moderation and equity as we have insisted on, is to expect much. But is it, my young friends, too much to expect from *you*? Have you not been acquiring these several elements, so essential to all virtuous exercise of authority, from the day on

which you entered this Institution? Has not every lesson of self-denial, every hour of thoughtful investigation, every active duty, had for its object, the conferring upon you these high qualifications, previously to conferring upon you authority to govern men. And now that you have actually passed through the several trials to which you have been subjected---trials under which so many have failed—now that you are here, having actually reached the goal, for which you started, is it too much to expect that you should "continue according to this beginning?"

Is it too much to expect that these rugged habits of self-denial in your style of living, laborious attention in investigating, promptitude in acting, and *method* withal—is it too much to hope that you will cherish these habits as an invaluable legacy, and hold them fast until they become a second nature? In such a career, who shall measure your success? With God's blessing upon you, why should not the fondest hopes of parents and friends be more than realized. That such *may* be the career of each one of you is my earnest prayer, to which, I am sure, all who hear me, are ready to respond, amen. Only be patient and steadfast in that career of virtuous endeavor, which you have proposed to yourselves in those sacred moments when conscience has asserted her supremacy, and *more* than you have ever dared to hope, may be realized. To this end, before all things fear God; next, see that ye "hate the thing that is evil" —know no rivals—have few confidants. The man whom you have *proved* and ventured to call your *friend*, "grapple to your bosom with hooks of steel." Bind your enmities and jealousies

about you, with a rope of sand. "Let all the ends thou aimest at, be thy God's, thy country's and thy honor's." Then it matters not whether the grave which shall cover thee when thy work is done, be lost to human view or no, since a more enduring monument than marble pile or column, shall be thine—thy *deeds of worth*, which shall be had in everlasting remembrance, even as thy *name*, which shall be blotted, *never*, from the book of God's remembrance.

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VI.

1 - JUL 28
Copy THE 1976

VALLEY OF VISION;

OR

THE DRY BONES OF ISRAEL REVIVED.

AN ATTEMPTED PROOF

(FROM EZEKIEL, CHAP. XXXVII. 1–14)

OF

THE RESTORATION AND CONVERSION

OF THE JEWS.

BY GEORGE BUSH,

PROFESSOR OF HEBREW, NEW-YORK CITY UNIVERSITY.

NEW-YORK:

SAXTON & MILES, 205 BROADWAY.

MDCCCXLIV.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1844, by
GEORGE BUSH,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern District of New-York.

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EXPOSITION OF EZEKIEL, Chap. xxxvii. 1–14.

THE VISION.

1 The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in
the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of
2 the valley which was full of bones, And caused me to pass
by them round about: and behold there were very many in
3 the open valley; and lo, they were very dry. And he said
unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? and I answered,
4 O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy
upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear
5 the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these
bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye
6 shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring
up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath
in you, and ye shall live, and ye shall know that I am the
7 Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophe-
sied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones
8 came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo,
the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin
covered them above: but there was no breath in them.
9 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son
of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God: Come
from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain,
10 that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me,
and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up
11 upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said
unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of
Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope
12 is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy
and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my
people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up
out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

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13 And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened
your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your
14 graves. And shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live,
and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know
that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the
Lord.

PREFATORY REMARKS.

No one of the ancient prophets has more explicitly announced the restoration of Israel, in the latter days, than Ezekiel. However large a proportion of his oracles is devoted to the fortunes of his people during the period of their captivity in Babylon and their subsequent return to their own land, it has almost never been doubted by commentators that the closing chapters of his book refer to their ulterior destinies, in a remote period of the Christian dispensation. Even when it is granted that there is a primary allusion to the restoration from Babylon, still the admission is freely made that there is at the same time an involved and inner reference to a final recall of the Jewish race from their prolonged dispersion among the nations, and their reinstatement in the land of their covenanted heritage. But it may safely be affirmed that this event is announced in many passages not as the secondary, but the primary burden of the prophet's oracle, and the chapter immediately preceding the present, viz. the thirty-sixth, is among the most distinguished of this class of predictions. Its grand scope is to announce, under the form of a bold apostrophe to the mountains, hills, rivers, and valleys, of the land of Israel, the return and resettlement of the exiled tribes all over the length and breadth of the desolate wastes and the forsaken cities, which had been so long "a prey and a derision to the residue of the heathen round about." In a tone of burning rebuke against the proud usurpers who had exulted in their possession of the "ancient high places" of the chosen race—who had, "with the joy of all their hearts and with despiteful minds," appropriated the hallowed territory to themselves—the Most High addresses the desolate soil itself, and declares that the period

of its barren sabbatism is drawing speedily to a close, that it shall be redeemed from its dreary depopulation, and shall bear the shame of the heathen no more. "Behold, I am for you, and I will turn you, and ye shall be tilled and sown. And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded; and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bear fruit; and I will settle you after your old estates, and I will do better unto you than at your beginnings; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more thenceforth bereave them of men."

This is no other than the definite form of the purposed fulfilment of the promise elsewhere recorded, "And I will remember the land;" and while, on the one hand, the language is of such a nature as absolutely to forbid any kind of spiritualizing interpretation, so, on the other, the obvious purport of several of the clauses goes to ascertain the *time* of the accomplishment as utterly incompatible with that of the literal return from Babylon under the decree of Cyrus. The announcements bear nothing more unequivocally on their face, than that this re-establishment in the land of Canaan shall be *final* and *permanent*. It shall be succeeded by no subsequent rooting out and dispersion; "Thus saith the Lord God, Because they say unto you, Thou land devourest up men, and hast bereaved thy nations; therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord God. Neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the heathen any more, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nations to fall any more, saith the Lord God." We do not see how any thing can be more express than this. If words have meaning, it certainly assures us that the return predicted is not to be followed by disasters to the inhabitants such as the land had witnessed for ages before. Yet what fact is more notorious than that subsequent to the return from Babylon the land has again been emptied of its occupants—that they have wandered as strangers in every clime—and that the hostile hoof of Arabian and Turkish coursers has bruised the flowerets of Esdraelon

and trampled in the dust the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley? We are, therefore, as we conceive, inevitably shut up to that construction of the prophecy which makes its fulfilment still future. That land of hallowed memories is yet to receive again its ancient tenants, and to yield its teeming riches to the old age of the same people whose infancy was nurtured upon its maternal bosom. The tears of a profound and heart-stricken penitence are yet to mingle with the dews of Hermon in fertilizing its barren vales and its deserted hill-tops. The olive and the vine shall again spread their honors over the mountains once delectable, but now desolate, the corn shall yet laugh in the valleys where the prowling Bedouin pitches his transient tent—and joyous groups of children, the descendants of patriarch fathers, shall renew their evening sports in the streets of crowded cities, where now the ruinous heaps tell only of a grandeur that has passed away.

It is with the prophetic intimations of these events that the XXXVIth chapter is occupied, and the ensuing chapter, which we propose to illustrate, is to be viewed in the closest relation with that which precedes. Both constitute in fact one extended series of predictions, taking hold of the very period of time to which we have now arrived. The former portion announces the *fact* of the restoration, the latter the *manner* and *means* of it. To determine the era of the one, is to determine that of the other. This is to be borne distinctly in mind in every stage of the ensuing exposition. Without assuming to fix with absolute precision the day or the year which the counsels of Providence may have assigned to the fulfilment, we are still confident that we incur no hazard in saying, that the most accurate researches in prophetic chronology, as well as the pregnant signs of the times, afford abundant warrant for the belief, that we are now just upon the borders of that sublime crisis in Providence of which the restoration of the Jews to Syria, and their ingathering into the church, is to be one of the prominent features.

Under the full persuasion that this event is announced in the chapter before us, I propose to enter upon the minute exposition of the vision with which it opens. My design in this, is to endeavor to disclose, from the purport of the prophecy, the probable course of Providence in relation to the conversion and restoration of the

Jews. This twofold order of events forms the subject of the present emblematic prediction. They are not indeed very studiously discriminated in the imagery employed, and I have accordingly, in the course of the ensuing exposition, spoken of them in terms that do not perhaps very accurately distinguish the one from the other. They are evidently designed, by the Spirit of inspiration, to be viewed in very intimate relation with each other, though it cannot be doubted that, in the order of occurrence, the return to Palestine will, as to the bulk of the nation, precede their ingrafting into Christ. If I have not mistaken the genuine drift of this prediction, it details more strikingly and precisely the order of events which is to usher in the grand result, than the Christian world have for the most part supposed; and if the progress of the commentary shall suggest new and interesting views of duty on the part of Christians, in reference to this desired consummation, the object will at once have approved itself abundantly worthy of all the labor expended upon it.

The chapter consists of two distinct visions, the first respecting the dry-bones in the valley, the other respecting the junction of the two sticks into one, indicating the union of the two houses of Judah and Israel after their return to their own land. It is to the consideration of the first of these that the following pages are devoted. The burden of this vision is so strictly defined by Jehovah himself, as intended to set forth, in a figurative way, the restoration of Israel from their long dispersion and captivity, from their political degradation and moral death, that I have not deemed it expedient to dwell upon those spiritual or *christianized* applications of it, which have been usual in all ages. The imagery employed undoubtedly possesses a striking inherent adaptedness to illustrate certain prominent features in the native condition of man, and to set off with signal effect the display of that omnipotent grace which can alone triumph over the deadness of the sinner's heart, and awake him to the appropriate functions of spiritual life. We deem it entirely according to the analogy of the sacred writers themselves to make such an accommodated use of the striking symbolical scenery of Scripture, while at the same time it cannot be doubted, that the tendency is to cause the interpreter to lose sight of the primary drift of such representations, and to make that sense sub-

ordinate which is in truth principal and paramount. So it cannot be questioned that many of the symbolic shadows of the Apocalypse are often employed in references foreign to the original scope of the inditing Spirit, although the doctrinal positions which they are brought to establish may be in themselves true. Thus, for instance, when the words—"the smoke of their torment ascendeth forever," —are understood of the punishment of the wicked in hell, although this may be in itself the fact, yet it is certain that this is not the primary purport of the passage, which alludes to the doom, not of the lost portion of the race at large in another world, but of a certain antichristian power in this. Other instances of a kindred character might easily be cited.

I trust, then, that it will not be attributed to any overlooking or disesteem of this mode of interpretation, that I have seen fit to confine myself exclusively to what the Holy Spirit has himself designated as the true meant design of the present mystic procedure. "Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel," &c. This declaration of the burden of the vision is too unequivocal to allow of doubt respecting it. By it every just exegesis must necessarily be governed. The only question of which the matter can admit is, in respect to the *time* when the predicted restoration is to be understood as taking place; whether it was the return from Babylon, or a similar event yet future. On this head we have adduced the grounds of our belief in a preceding paragraph. We are, for ourselves, satisfied of the futurity of the accomplishments here shadowed forth, although persuaded that the period is at hand when their incipiency is to be anticipated; and we look upon this and every kindred attempt at the thoroughgoing exposition of this class of prophecies, as themselves among the significant *indicia* of their speedy fulfilment. It will be seen, if our ensuing exposition is built upon good grounds, that whoever rightly unfolds the prophecies respecting the restoration of Israel, is in fact prophesying over the dry bones of the valley of vision.

It is obvious that in this, as in every other region of biblical inquiry, our conclusions are of no value except so far as they are sustained by a fair and unimpeachable exegesis of the sense of the original. I shall therefore deem no apology necessary for the array of the Hebrew text, with that of several of the ancient versions at the head of my expositions. The Scriptural argument which I design to present, frequently rests, in some of its important points, on the just application of single words and phrases, and this can seldom be compassed without exhibiting the *usus loquendi* of the sacred writers in their own language. Adequate translations, however, accompanying the originals, will put the mere English reader nearly on a level with the learned Hebrician as to advantage in understanding the force of terms.

For the sake of my less literate readers I may observe in regard to these versions, that the Greek is that of the Septuagint or *Seventy*, so called from its being said to have been accomplished by *seventy* individuals appointed by Ptolemy, King of Egypt, for the purpose. The word *Targum* signifies *interpretation*. The *Targum of Jonathan* is an ancient paraphrase made in the Chaldee language by a person of that name, and published, together with the Latin, Greek, Syriac, and Arabic, in the Polyglot Bible of Walton. It is very free, but throws occasionally important light upon the meaning of the prophets, especially by translating the language of symbols into a simple and more literal diction. Of this I have deemed it sufficient to give an exact rendering, without inserting the original.—The *Vulgate* is the usual designation of the Latin version of Jerome.

THE PROPHECY.

VERSE I.

HEB.

חִיתָה עָלַי יַד יְהוָה וַיּוֹצִיאֵנִי
בְרוּחַ יְהוָה וַיְנִיחֵנִי בְתוֹךְ
הַבִּקְעָה וְהִיא מְלֵאָה עֲצָמוֹת׃

ENG. VERS.

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which *was* full of bones.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐπ᾽ ἐμὲ χεὶρ Κυρίου, καὶ ἐξήγαγέ με ἐν πνεύματι Κύριος, καὶ ἔθηκέ με ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ πεδίου, καὶ τοῦτο ἦν μεστὸν ὀστέων ἀνθρωπίνων.

ENG. VERS.

And the hand of the Lord was upon me, and the Lord brought me out in spirit, and placed me in the midst of a plain, and this was full of human bones.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

The spirit of prophecy from before the Lord settled upon me, and he brought me in the spirit of prophecy which had settled upon me from before the Lord, and placed me in the midst of a field which was full of the bones of men.

VULG. VERS.

Facta est super me manus Domini, et eduxit me in spiritu Domini; et dimisit me in medio campi, qui erat plenus ossibus.

COMMENTARY.

The hand of the Lord was upon me. Heb. חָיְתָה עָלַי יַד יְהוָה. The usage which employs "hand of the Lord" for "power of the Lord," or supernatural illapse of the Divine Spirit upon the mind of the prophet, is of frequent occurrence with the sacred writers. Thus ch. 33. 22, "Now the *hand of the Lord* was upon me in the evening." Ch. 40. 1, "In the self-same day the *hand of the Lord* was upon me, and brought me thither." The Targum of Jonathan, given above, discloses its true import; "The spirit of prophecy from before the Lord settled upon me." The precise manner in which this influence was exerted upon the prophets, it is not necessary to determine. They were, by a supernatural power, brought into an entranced condition similar to that of Paul, when he says of himself, that he was caught up into the third heaven, and knew not whether he was in the body or out of the body.

And carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord. Heb. וַיּוֹצִיאֵנִי בְּרוּחַ יְהוָה. The grammatical construction is here subject to some doubt. According to our version, which is derived from the Lat. Vulg., it is the *hand of the Lord* which leads the prophet forth, but this does violence to syntax, as it makes "hand" to be both masculine and feminine in the same verse. The Greek, doubtless, represents the true construction of the original; *καὶ ἐξήγαγέ με ἐν πνεύματι κύριος, and the Lord led me out in Spirit.* This the Hebrew will readily admit, and indeed the position of the accents requires it; "The Lord carried me out in spirit." Here, again, we have the true clue to the sense afforded in the version of the Targum: "And he led me forth in the spirit of prophecy which had settled upon me from before the Lord." It was not a *real* but a *mental* leading forth to the scene of the vision. Such an influence came upon him as to transport him in spirit to the place described. It is the usual phraseology for expressing the condition of prophetic ecstasy or trance, in which the subject is often in body in one place and in spirit conveyed to another. In this peculiar psychical state, the laws of which are but imperfectly understood, the unreal becomes to the beholder for the time real, and he is surrounded by scenery which is to him invested with the character of *bona fide* existence, and which in his waking moments, and in his normal state, he describes just as it was presented to his mind's eye. This entranced condition seems to have been repeatedly the lot of Ezekiel, in the course of his discharge of the prophetic functions to which he was called. Thus, ch. 8. 1—3, "And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me. Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire: and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy." So again, ch. 11. 24, "Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity."

Altogether similar was the state into which Daniel and John were brought in the reception of these divine communications which were made to them relative to the future destinies of the church and the world; nor do we suppose that eminently good men in other ages have been wholly strangers to supernatural illapses very

nearly akin to those of the prophets. That this state has often been simulated by religious enthusiasts, and bold claims put forth to extraordinary revelations, which were prompted solely by a spirit of delusion, must indeed be admitted; but this is not sufficient to disprove the fact, that genuine influences of this nature are occasionally vouchsafed to the pious in all periods of the church. The spurious and the counterfeit rather argues the existence of the true and the real, and the fact that Satan may transform himself into an angel of light does not invalidate, but rather confirms, the doctrine that there are angels of light whom he would fain personate. The source of such alleged spiritual phenomena must be judged of by their accordance with the general tenor of Scripture, and by the practical teachings and deportment of those who lay claim to them. Nothing of this nature must be admitted for a moment to be of God which in any manner goes to contravene or supersede the obvious import of the written word; and in the case of the prophets, it is probable that a certain ineffable self-evidencing power went with the disclosures accorded to them, which put their divine origin beyond question.

And set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones. The original word for *set down* (וַיָּנִיחֵנִי) signifies properly *to cause to rest*, and implies *a gentle demission* or *alighting*, as from an aerial flight. It would seem that the prophets in their ecstasy conceived themselves to be borne by a sailing motion through the air, and the term here employed is peculiarly appropriate to the easy and gentle lighting down of a winged being from the atmosphere. Thus, ch. 40. 2, "In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and *set me* (וַיַּנִּיחֵנִי *and made me to rest*) upon a very high mountain." This was a similar transportation in the spirit to that which we are now considering.—The Heb. בִּקְעָה, from בָּקַע *to cleave*, has primarily the signification of *valley*, as formed by the *cleaving* of mountains, but its more frequent sense is that of *plain* (*πεδίον*), as rendered by the Greek and Syriac. The Arabic has *solitude* or *desert*. The Heb. usage will be seen from the following examples. Gen. 11. 2, "And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a *plain* (בִּקְעָה) in the land of Shinar." The site of Babylon is well known to be an extensive plain. If we suppose a primary allusion in the prophecy to the condition of the Jews in Babylon, the propriety of the proposed rendering is still more apparent. So, Ezek. 3. 22, 23, "And the hand of the Lord was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into *the plain* (בִּקְעָה), and I will there talk with thee. Then I arose, and went forth into *the plain* (בִּקְעָה); and behold, the glory of the Lord stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar: and I fell on my face." This is probably the import of the term in the present connexion. The "bones"

spoken of are not expressly said to have been human bones, but this is the natural inference, and such is the actual rendering of both the Chaldee and the Greek. These bones, as if the remains of numerous unburied corses, were strewed in every direction over the surface of the plain, and in the midst of them the prophet is in imagination set down.

VERSE II.

HEB.

וְהַעֲבִירַנִי עֲלֵיהֶם סָבִיב סָבִיב
וְהִנֵּה רַבּוֹת מְאֹד עַל־פְּנֵי הַבִּקְעָה
וְהִנֵּה יְבֵשׁוֹת מְאֹד׃

ENG. VERS.

And caused me to pass by them round about; and behold *there were* very many in the open valley; and lo, *they were* very dry.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ περιήγαγέ με ἐπ᾽ ἀυτά κυκλόθεν κύκλῳ, καὶ ἰδού πολλὰ σφόδρα ἐπὶ προσώπου τοῦ πεδίου, ξηρὰ σφόδρα.

ENG. VERS.

And he led me round about in repeated circles upon them, and behold exceeding many upon the face of the plain, and exceeding dry.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And he made me to pass in circuit about them, and behold there were very many upon the face of the field, and behold they were very dry.

VULG. VERS.

Et circumduxit me per ea in gyro; erant autem multa valde super faciem campi, siccaque vehementer.

COMMENTARY.

2. *And caused me to pass by them round about.* The original is here rendered peculiarly emphatic and expressive by the duplication of the term rendered *round about;* "He caused me to pass by them, סָבִיב סָבִיב *around, around,*" as if required by repeated circuits to make the most intent survey of these mournful mementoes of mortality—these accumulated relics of what had once been a multitudinous host of living men, fresh in the strength of manhood, acting, hoping, fearing, loving, but now sunk down to a mere ghastly residuum of dried and withered bones! The image of the lonely traveller or the meditative sage walking to and fro amid the ruins of an ancient city, pondering upon its dilapidated palaces, tracing out the course of its crumbling walls, or deciphering its dimmed inscriptions, comes upon the spirit full of sombre and affecting impressions. But what is this compared with the effect of which we are conscious, when called to contemplate ideally a scene like the present? Here is a prophet of God standing, not in the midst of mouldering pillars, arches, and towers, but of the ruins of man himself! It is not the relics of the work of his hands which he surveys, but of the hand of his works! The temple may be

built again—the prostrate column may be re-erected—the ivy-spread arch may be restored to its grandeur—but what power can re-build the builder? What resurrection can await the fragments of that glorious structure to which all other structures owe their origin? This is the paramount prompting in the midst of such a scene. This is the grand problem now presented to the mind of the seer. "Son of man, can these bones live."

And behold, there were very many in the open valley; and lo, they were very dry. The original for "in the open valley," is עַל פְּנֵי הַבִּקְעָה, *upon the face or surface of the plain.* Over this they appeared to be spread in such profusion as to indicate that they might have been the bones of a numerous army slain and lying unburied on the spot, while the bleached and arid aspect which they presented evinced the long period that they had lain exposed to the action of sun and wind. The condition of the bones was such, moreover, as to indicate in the highest degree the hopelessness of their restoration to life. They were not only bare of flesh, but void of moisture. Dried, marrowless, disjointed, and scattered promiscuously here and there, what could be a more expressive type of the triumph of death and dissolution! What conviction more spontaneous than that the very dust on which they reposed might as soon be expected to become animated and formed into living men as the whitened masses spread around? Nothing short of the same Almighty fiat which originally reared the fabric of the human body from the clay could be competent to their resuscitation. Nothing less than the power which forms the skeleton can endow it with life. So far therefore as this symbol was intended to represent a subject upon which a reviving influence was to be put forth, it clearly exhibits the state of that subject as hopeless, helpless, desperate, to the last conceivable degree; and nothing is more evident than this from the question which follows.

VERSE III.

HEB.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בֶּן־אָדָם הֲתִחְיֶינָה
הָעַצְמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וָאֹמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה
אַתָּה יָדָעְתָּ׃

ENG. VERS.

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? and I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ εἶπε πρός με, Υἱὲ ἀνθρώπου, εἰ ζήσεται τὰ ὀστέα ταῦτα; καὶ εἶπα, Κύριε, κύριε, σὺ ἐπίστῃ ταῦτα.

ENG. VERS.

And he said unto me, Son of man, whether shall these bones live? and I said, Lord, Lord, thou understandest these things.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.	VULG. VERS.
And he said unto me, Son of Man, can these bones live? And I said, O Lord God, it is manifest before thee.	Et dixit ad me, Fili hominis, putasne vivent ossa ista? Et dixi, Domine Deus, tu nôsti.

COMMENTARY.

3. *And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live?* That is, can they live again, can they be revived? Dost thou deem it possible that such an event can occur? Such is the genuine force of the original. The Hebrew חָיָה, *to live*, imports in frequent connexions *to live again, to be revived.* The same is the force of the Greek ζαω̃ in the following and numerous other instances: Mat. 9. 18, "My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she *shall live* (ζήσεται);" i. e. shall live again. John 5. 25, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear *shall live* (ζήσονται);" i. e. shall be revived, or quickened. John 11. 25, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet *shall he live* (ζήσεται);" i. e. shall live again. The more usual term for expressing this idea is ἀναζαω̃, *to revive*, but ζαω̃ is employed in the same sense, and this sense it has in Rev. 20. 5, "And the rest of the dead *lived not again* (οὐκ ἔζησαν) till the thousand years were finished," where many copies exhibit a corrupt reading, ἀνεζήσαν. The question is proposed to the prophet merely for the purpose of exciting attention and putting his mind into a posture that should enable him to appreciate more adequately the immense display of power which the emergency demanded. This is, in repeated instances, the design of the interrogations propounded by God to his servants. He asks, not to inform himself, but to inform them. A sluggish, inobservant state of mind is eminently unsuited to the striking and gracious exhibitions of the divine glory, and therefore he usually sees fit to dissipate all torpor and awaken a vivid attention before manifesting his might. The response of the prophet—"O Lord God, thou knowest"—implies a becoming recognition of the resources of omnipotence. It is as if he had said, "I am a child, a simpleton, a fool. To human view such an event would seem impossible. But I know that thy power is commensurate to thy purposes, and thy purposes are known to thyself. Here my answer must end." Both in his word and in his providence God often poses his people with questions to which they can return no other answer than, "Lord, thou knowest."

VERSE IV.

HEB.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הִנָּבֵא עַל־הָעֲצָמוֹת
הָאֵלֶּה וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם הָעֲצָמוֹת
הַיְבֵשׁוֹת שִׁמְעוּ דְּבַר־יְהוָה׃

ENG. VERS.

Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye bones, hear the word of the Lord.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ εἶπε πρός με, προφήτευσον ἐπὶ τὰ ὀστᾶ ταῦτα, καὶ ἐρεῖς αὐτοῖς, Τὰ ὀστᾶ ξηρὰ, ἀκούσατε λόγον Κυρίου.

ENG. VERS.

And he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and thou shalt say unto them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and thou shalt say unto them, Dry bones, receive the word of the Lord.

VULG. VERS.

Et dixit ad me, Vaticinare de ossibus istis; et dices eis, Ossa arida, audite verbum Domini.

COMMENTARY.

4. *Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones.* Heb. עַל הָעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה *upon* or *over these bones; de ossibus his*, as Junius and Tremellius, Polanus and Piscator, render it. He was to prophesy *concerning* the bones, and at the same time he was to direct his address *to* them, as if they were capable of hearing and acting according to the burden of the prophetic call. It is thus that the heralds of the gospel are to proclaim the message of heaven to their fellow-men, who are dead in trespasses and sins, and who, having eyes, see not, and ears, hear not. As to the Hebrew הִנָּבֵא, *prophesy*, from the root נָבָא, *to prophesy, to discharge the functions of a prophet*, it is worthy of remark that the verb in this sense never occurs in the active but always in the passive form, as if the prophet, in the execution of his office, only acted as he was acted upon. The intimation therefore is clearly conveyed in the original word that the speaker was simply an organ through which the divine afflatus uttered itself. So in the Hebrew word נִשְׁבַּע, *to swear*, the form is passive, indicating that a person in taking an oath was in a recipient state, or, in other words, *was adjured*. This fact, in regard to the present term, goes far to refute the notion that the inspired prophets were completely *sui juris* in their predictions, merely uttering the product of their own intelligence going forth in sagacious anticipation of the future. It is pre-eminently in prophecy that "holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

But a remark of far more importance upon the term before us is one that regards its symbolical rather than its grammatical import.

We believe there are adequate grounds for understanding "prophesy" in this connexion as equivalent to *explaining prophecy.* But in order to evince the soundness of this interpretation, a previous remark is requisite relative to the office sustained by the ancient prophets. It is, we think, unquestionable, that this class of men frequently enter themselves, as an essential element, into the symbolical transactions which they describe. In other words, they sustain a typical character, representing the persons of those who in subsequent ages should hold a relation somewhat similar to theirs to the mystic events of their visions. Thus, it is expressly affirmed by Isaiah, ch. 8. 18, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts." This is rendered, by some commentators, "for signs and for *types* in Israel"—and the force of the original undoubtedly warrants the construction. This representative character is illustrated, Is. 20. 2, 3, where the prophet is commanded to walk naked and barefoot for three years, "for a sign and a wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia," i. e. to shadow forth symbolically the captivity of those nations. Of Ezekiel himself it is expressly said, in reference to his performance of certain emblematic actions, ch. 12. 6, "I have set thee for a sign unto the house of Israel;" and again, v. 3, he was commanded to say to the people, "Thus saith the Lord God, This burden concerneth the prince in Jerusalem, and all the house of Israel that are among them. Say, I am your sign; like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them: they shall remove and go into captivity." Thus too on a subsequent occasion, ch. 24. 24, "Ezekiel is unto you a sign; according to all that he hath done, shall ye do." So also in the visions of the Apocalypse we recognize John not only as a spectator, but an actor, in which he represents his fellow-members of the church living and acting at the time when the events thus scenically portrayed actually transpire. Upon this Daubuz remarks, that "John appears acting on these occasions, not in his private, but in his public capacity or office, as a representative of his fellow-brethren. He is ordered to receive the vision and to transmit it to the catholic church, to serve through all its periods; and therefore he represents its members through every period, and on every occasion, wherein he acts in the vision."

With these instances before us, we feel abundantly warranted in regarding Ezekiel as acting in a representative character in the present vision. The office which he is commanded to perform is virtually that which is to be performed in subsequent ages by those sustaining a somewhat similar relation to the people of God. An order of men whose office it is to minister to the edification of the church by unfolding the sense of the prophetic oracles, has always been a part of the divine economy. In the apostolic days of Chris-

tianity we find the term prophet used in this sense, or as denoting those who were inwardly prompted, by an inferior kind of inspiration, to expound the purport of the Old Testament prophecies, 1 Cor. 14. 2–5: "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying." As we find no evidence that there was any class of men in the primitive church whose stated office it was, in their religious meetings, to act the prophet in the sense of predicting *de novo* events that were future, though the apostles occasionally discharged this function in their epistles, we seem to be shut up to the conclusion, that the essence of their vocation was *the expounding of prophecies already uttered.* Indeed, we doubt not that the truth will be found, upon accurate research, to be, that the New Testament contains *very little* of this nature which goes beyond the development of the inner import of the ancient predictions as they bear upon the spiritual genius and the prospective fortunes of the gospel of Christ. Even the Apocalypse itself, as is indicated by its title—"The Unveiling"—is scarcely any thing more than an inspired exposition of the shaded and mystic announcements of the Hebrew canon.

We cannot hesitate, therefore, to regard Ezekiel as acting on this occasion in a typical capacity, and as called to perform a duty which is by no means confined to himself personally. It is one which devolves also upon all those who, in the latter day, may be called to exercise the prophetic function, in the sense now explained, for the spiritual behoof of the churches of the faithful. As the prospective reach of the great burden of the vision extends down to a distant posterity, so has the agency of the prophet himself a like stretch of significancy. Let it once be admitted that the event itself is future, and we see not how it is possible to avoid this conclusion. The prophesying here mentioned is obviously related to the revival of the bones, as a means to an end. It is a means operating at the very time when the effect takes place. Is it not plain, then, that the futurity of the event, in reference to the stand-point of the prophet, necessitates the futurity of the agency by which the event is to be brought about? The import of the vision is in nothing more obvious than in the fact, that Ezekiel's prophesying was to be the direct means of the resuscitation of the bones. But if we suppose the prophecy to have been uttered two thousand

years before the event, how does it tend to produce the event, except by being applied at the time by those who may be competently endowed for the work?

The burden of the prophecy is the reviviscence of the dry bones. It is the utterance of an imperative declaration to this effect that produces the actual result. Ezekiel, then, has furnished his share of the matter of the announcement which his official successors are to repeat over the contents of this visionary charnel-house or Golgotha, as the ordained means for waking the mass to life and action. Is it not, then, a perfectly tenable position, that it is by the exposition of prophecy that spiritual life is to be imparted to the subject of the symbolical prediction, and that whoever, at this day, rightly discloses the tenor of the various prophecies respecting the restoration of the Jews, does in fact perform the very duty here enjoined upon Ezekiel in his representative capacity? The important practical consequences which grow out of this view of the subject will be dwelt upon in the sequel.

VERSE V.

HEB.

כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה ׀ לָעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה הִנֵּה אֲנִי מֵבִיא בָכֶם רוּחַ וִחְיִיתֶם׃

ENG. VERS.

Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live.

GR. OF LXX.

Τάδε λέγει Κύριος τοῖς ὀστέοις τούτοις, Ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ φέρω ἐπ᾽ ὑμᾶς πνεῦμα ζωῆς.

ENG. VERS.

These things saith the Lord to these bones: Behold, I bring upon you the spirit of life.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

These things saith the Lord to these bones, Behold, I will send into you spirit, and ye shall live.

VULG. VERS.

Hæc dicit Dominus ossibus his, ecce ego intromittam in vos spiritum, et vivetis.

COMMENTARY.

5. *Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live.* Heb. הִנֵּה אֲנִי מֵבִיא בָכֶם רוּחַ, *behold I (am) bringing (or will bring) into you spirit.* The original word (רוּחַ) signifies both *breath* and *spirit*, as the external act of respiration is the visible index of the indwelling vital spirit which animates the body. For this reason the Latin *animus*, *soul*, is supposed to be derived, by a slight change of form, from *anima*, *breath* or *wind*. The declaration is more fully expanded in the ensuing verse, where it is announced, that the infusion of the vital breath shall be subsequent to the reconstruction of the frame

and its investiture with sinews, flesh, and skin. The present passage is a mere general intimation of the final issue of the divine potency put forth upon the bones of the vision.

VERSE VI.

HEB.

וְנָתַתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם גִּידִים וְהַעֲלֵיתִי
עֲלֵיכֶם בָּשָׂר וְקָרַמְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם עוֹר
וְנָתַתִּי בָכֶם רוּחַ וִחְיִיתֶם וִידַעְתֶּם
כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה׃

ENG. VERS.

And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ δώσω ἐφ᾽ ὑμᾶς νεῦρα, καὶ ἀνάξω ἐφ᾽ ὑμᾶς σάρκα, καὶ ἐντενῶ ἐφ᾽ ὑμᾶς δέρμα, καὶ δώσω πνεῦμα μου εἰς ὑμᾶς, καὶ ζήσεσθε, καὶ γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι Κύριος.

ENG. VERS.

And I will give upon you sinews, and I will bring upon you flesh, and I will stretch over you skin, and I will give my spirit within you, and ye shall live, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And I will give upon you sinews, and will make to grow upon you flesh, and will superinduce upon you skin, and will give to you spirit, and ye shall live and shall know that I am the Lord.

VUL. VERS.

Et dabo super vos nervos, et succrescere faciam super vos carnes, et superextendam super vos cutem; et dabo vobis spiritum, et vivebis, et scietis, quia ego Dominus.

COMMENTARY.

6. *And I will lay sinews upon you.* Heb. וְנָתַתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם גִּידִים, *and I will give upon you sinews or tendons.* Gr. *νεῦρα.* Lat. *nervos,* of the same import. As the original root has the sense of *binding,* the word denotes those parts of the frame which serve as *ligatures* to unite and firmly bind together the whole into one compact structure.

The following is the comment or paraphrase of Jerome upon the words before us: "First the bones are compacted together by the ligaments of the sinews; they are then filled with flesh; and finally, for the sake of beauty, a skin, which should veil the unsightliness of the naked flesh, is spread above over the whole."

And I will bring up flesh upon you. Heb. וְהַעֲלֵיתִי עֲלֵיכֶם בָּשָׂר, *and I will cause to ascend upon you flesh.* From the particularity with which the several stages of the process are described, it would seem impossible to doubt that something analogous is to be recognized in the order of the fulfilment itself. Indeed, when we turn from the shadow to the substance, nothing would seem more probable than that the spiritual regeneration of the Jews will be

effected in a singularly gradual manner. The influences adverse to their recovery are so numerous and multiform, that it is doubtless no more than a rational anticipation, that they will come by slow and hesitating steps to the position which they are destined to occupy in the kingdom of the Messiah.

And cover you with skin. Heb. קָרַמְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם עוֹר. The Heb. term קָרַם occurs only here and v. 8, and is variously rendered in the versions by *induce*, *superinduce*, *crust over*, &c., which undoubtedly give the true sense, as Gesenius traces its use to the description of the process by which melted metals are superinduced upon statues or other substances. In this view Michaelis agrees. (*Lex. Suppl. in voc.*)

And put breath in you, and ye shall live. This crowning act of animation is all that remains to be done to transform the fleshly fabrics to living men. Till this is effected, they are merely advanced to the condition of Adam when fashioned from the clay, but before the Lord God had breathed into him the breath of life by which he became a living soul. Indeed, the slightest glance suffices to evince, that the whole process here described is accurately conformed to the account of the creation of Adam in the opening of Genesis. The gradual stages of the vivification are portrayed with a continual allusion to that magnificent work, and that doubtless with the design to intimate, that nothing short of a power absolutely creative was competent to the purposed result. The omnipotence which originally reared the human body from the dust—which "fenced it about with bones and sinews"—which "formed the eye and planted the ear"—is alone competent to build again the ruined fabric, and endow it with vital properties. Such an exhibition of Divine power would indeed lay a basis for the acknowledgment that was to follow;—"And ye shall know that I am the Lord." An overwhelming demonstration should thus be made of the wonder-working energies of Jehovah. It would be impossible to ascribe the effect to any other than the true cause. And at such an end does the Most High invariably aim in all the signal manifestations of his glory. He has determined to make himself known to the children of men in the plentitude of his sufficiency, and in nothing more than in those marvellous puttings forth which are to result in the recovery of his chosen people from the long captivity to which they have been subjected for their rebellion and unbelief. See the confirmation of this in the Notes on v. 13.

Those who are at all versed in Jewish lore are aware that this passage has been understood by many of the Rabbins as predicting a *literal* resurrection at the time of its fulfilment. Rab. Johanan says, that the valley here mentioned was the valley or plain of Dura, where the image of Nebuchadnezzar was set up, and that

these bones were the bones of those who had been slain by the Babylonian monarch, to whom a resurrection is promised in the present prophecy. Rab. Eliezer says, that the dead, who were quickened by the prophetic word of Ezekiel, stood upon their feet, sung a song, and died. Another Rabbi of the same name affirms that these quickened multitudes, after their resurrection, went up into the land of Israel, married wives, and begat sons and daughters; and of one of the ancient Rabbis it is asserted, that "he stood upon his feet and said, I am of their children's children, and these are the *Tephilim* (frontlets) my father's father left me." (*Tal. Bab. Sanhed. fol.* 92. 2.) But these are fictions savoring too strongly of Talmudical extravagance to be deserving of particular notice. In maintaining that the whole transaction is of a purely symbolical character, designed to shadow forth the future restoration of Israel, we answer both the Jews and those Christian expositors who have adopted the opinion that a literal resurrection is at least latently taught in the oracle before us. It is not perhaps necessary to deny that there is some color of reason in the suggestion, that a *figurative* resurrection supposes a *literal* one—an idea which is much insisted on by Tertullian and several of the ancient fathers in their comments on the passage. Still we recognize no *necessity* for such a covert allusion, nor does the question proposed to the prophet—"Can these bones live?"—strike as so natural when proposed to one to whom the idea of a literal resurrection was familiar, as on the contrary hypothesis. The conception of a previous state of decay, dissolution and death, followed by a revival and recovery from that state, has nothing of difficulty in it, even were the doctrine of a real resurrection of the dead body utterly unknown. On the other hand, if it *were* known, it is not easy to conceive how the question proposed should have occasioned any surprise or hesitation on the part of the prophet; as the revival of a mass of bones, heaped up in a single valley, would be as nothing to that power which was to raise from the dust of death the whole human race. The evident scope of the whole scenical transaction, as well as of the question built upon it, is to intimate the most unlikely deliverance from a state depressed, wretched, and desperate to the last degree. The figures or emblems used to denote such an interposition of omnipotence would obviously possess a force and energy proportioned to the strangeness and newness of the process which was chosen to represent it; and such a process would be that which should prompt the exclamation of the Psalmist, Ps. 88. 11—12, "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?"

Yet it may still be admitted that the secret meaning of the

spirit of inspiration may be contemplated independent of the personal belief or intention of the writer; and if any one shall choose to maintain that such an occult allusion as we have mentioned is conveyed in the imagery here employed, we know not how to gainsay it. All that we would affirm is, that it is not *necessary* to the object had in view in delivering the oracle, nor can it be demonstratively shown to be involved in it.

VERSE VII.

HEB.

וְהִנָּבֵאתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר צֻוֵּיתִי וַיְהִי־קוֹל כְּהִנָּבְאִי וְהִנֵּה־רַעַשׁ וַתִּקְרְבוּ עֲצָמוֹת עֶצֶם אֶל־עַצְמוֹ׃

ENG. VERS.

So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ προεφήτευσα καθῶς ἐτετείλατό μοι· καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ἐμὲ προφητεῦσαι, καὶ ἰδοὺ σεισμὸς, καὶ προσήγαγε τὰ ὀστᾶ ἑκατέρον πρὸς τὴν ἁρμονίαν αὐτοῦ.

ENG. VERS.

And I prophesied as he commanded me; and it came to pass as I prophesied, and behold a shaking, and he brought together the bones, each to his fitting.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And I prophesied as was commanded me, and there was a voice as I prophesied, and behold a shaking, and the bones approached each to his bone.

VULG. VERS.

Et prophetavi sicut praeceperat mihi; factus est autem sonitus, prophetante me, et ecce commotio; et accesserunt ossa ad ossa, unumquodque ad juncturam suam.

COMMENTARY.

7. *So I prophesied as I was commanded.* Undeterred by the apparent hopelessness of the result, and confiding implicitly in the power of Him who had given the command, the prophet enters at once upon the duty assigned him. An unbelieving spirit would have remonstrated upon being charged with such a strange commission. It would have brought up and pleaded the desperate nature of the undertaking. It would have arrayed before it the manifold impossibilities that clustered around the result announced. But nothing of this character avails with the instructed servant of the Most High, who was aware of the resources of omnipotence, and who was familiar with the history of the divine proceedings towards his people in former ages. That history was little else than a tissue of miracles, and if God commanded, what had he to do but obey? The same considerations are to be brought by his ministering servants in all ages to support their faith in the discharge of

trying duties, against the successful issue of which reason reclaims. Even at the grave of Lazarus the reviving message is to be declared, and over the moral cemetery of sin, in which so many souls are entombed, the minister of life is to proclaim his vivific mandate.

And as I prophesied, there was a noise. Heb. וַיְהִי קוֹל. Gr. *καὶ ἐγενέτο φωνη, and there was a voice.* This *voice*, or *noise*, considered as a part of the mystic scenery, is variously explained by commentators. Vatablus understands it of a peal of thunder, which Ezekiel heard at that moment, while the *shaking* he interprets of an earthquake that simultaneously occurred. This may perhaps be admitted, provided we give the principal prominence to the symbolic import of these phenomena, though the interpretation is still uncertain. A Lapide regards it as referring to the sound made by the meeting and colliding bones. But this effect is expressed rather by the *shaking* immediately afterwards spoken of. As nothing is expressly said in the text of the source or nature of the sound, the circumstance is probably to be viewed rather in connexion with the events of the fulfilment than of the representing emblems. In the absence of any definite intimation on the subject, it may be sufficient to understand it as indicating some aerial agitation which conveyed to the ear of the prophet a vague sensation of sound, without any distinct vocal intonation or utterance. The gloss of Grotius upon the words is one that arises naturally from his view of the dominant scope of the vision. Conceiving it to refer directly and exclusively to the deliverance from Babylon, he subjoins, by way of explanation, the words—"significans Cyri edictum." The voice of the royal decree empowering the captive tribes to return and rebuild their temple, he supposes to be the voice which here salutes the ear of the entranced prophet. But as we are constrained to regard the symbolic scenery as having a vastly more extended reach of import, so are we forced to seek for a different solution of this circumstance of the mystic transactions. A process is here described which was to result in the moral quickening of the Jewish race. This was to be effected mainly by the agency of *prophesying*, i. e., by explaining the prophecies which relate to that event. The sound of the mystic voice is heard in intimate connexion with the prophetic utterance. The strict reading of the original is, "And there was a voice in my prophesying." This does not refer to his own voice, but to some voice which was rather awakened as an echo to his—some voice that was the natural result of the oracular proclamations which he was called to put forth. Regarded in this light, what are we to recognize in it but the loud and spontaneous *response*, which shall be heard throughout the bounds of Christendom when the burden of this prophetic announcement begins to seize upon and command the attention of the churches? When the light of a

clear and convincing exegesis begins to be poured upon the Scriptural predictions of the speedy restoration of Israel, will there not be "a voice?" Will not the subject awaken a universal interest? Will it not become a topic which will dwell upon every tongue? Will it not enter the themes of a thousand pulpits? Will it not form the matter of innumerable discussions through the press? In a word, will not a prospective event of such a signal character be everywhere *bruited* throughout the length and breadth of the Christian world?

But while we are disposed to consider this as one sense of the *voice* or *noise* which the inditing Spirit had prominently in view in the words before us, we are still inclined to recognize another drift in the symbol as here employed. We have already adverted to the comment of Grotius, who makes the "voice" to signify the decree of Cyrus for the Jews' return to Canaan. We believe he is in error in making that event the fulfilment of the visionary presage; but we may still grant that the prophecy is constructed with an *allusion* to that sovereign edict, just as the process of vivification described *alludes* all along to the original creation of Adam. And in this view it is certainly not a little remarkable, that the term קוֹל is employed in reference to a royal proclamation. Thus Ezra, 1. 1, "The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, that he *made a proclamation* (וַיַּעֲבֵר קוֹל, *caused a voice pass*), and put it also in writing, saying," etc. So also Ezra, 10. 7, "And they *made a proclamation* (וַיַּעֲבִירוּ קוֹל, *and they made a voice to pass*) throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity," etc. Ex. 36. 6, "And Moses gave commandment, and they *caused it to be proclaimed* (וַיַּעֲבִירוּ קוֹל, *caused a voice to pass*) throughout the camp, saying," etc. 2 Chron. 30. 5, (6), "So they established a decree *to make proclamation* (לְהַעֲבִיר קוֹל, *to cause a voice to pass*) throughout all Israel." The usage disclosed in these instances indicates a sense of the term peculiarly appropriate to the present connexion. It affords an ample ground for interpreting the term "voice," when used in prophetic relations, of governmental edicts, decrees, or proclamations. And one of the ancient Oneirocritics, or *dream-expounders*, remarks that "if a king dreams of uttering a clear voice, it signifies that he shall *proclaim a new law.*" In like manner, when it is said in the Apocalypse that *voices* were heard issuing from the throne, the import is that of *authoritative decrees* promulged by the ruling powers for the establishment of the church. So, again, the seven thunders uttering their voices is interpreted by Daubuz of the enactments and rescripts of the various European monarchs in favor of the Reformation under Luther, as these symbolical *voices* denote, according to him, "the laws or constitutions of the supreme powers." With these explanations, then,

as a key to the present passage, we may properly understand the "voice" now heard by the prophet of those edicts, statutes, and royal ordinances, which will be issued by the different Christian governments in favor of the Jews, removing the civil disabilities under which they have labored, promoting, in various ways, their restoration from the thraldom and oppression which has so long ground them to the dust, and elevating them to a rank of honorable repute among the nations of the earth. This process is already in train. The legislation of Christian lands is beginning to undo the heavy burdens which they have bound upon the necks of Jewish subjects, and to recognize their claims to the rights of men and of citizens. In England especially, the oppressive restrictions which formerly existed towards them are essentially relaxed, and their example is being followed by the governments of other nations. It is well known that large concessions of Jewish privilege have been made within a few years by the Sultan of the Turkish empire, where their political thraldom has ever been most signally onerous and grinding. These are events full of hopeful presage to the outcast Israelite, and it cannot be doubted that in proportion as the prophetic destiny of this people is better understood, these ameliorating ordinances in their behalf will continue to be multiplied more and more.

And behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. Heb. רַעַשׁ *concussion, commotion.* In its primary purport, the term denotes the noise that would be made by the rattling of the bones, as they began to be stirred from their long quiescence, and by the collision of one against another as they came together each to its fellow. The uniting process is expressively rendered in the Greek and Syriac, "the bones came together, each to his fitting or juncture." A somewhat violent and sonorous clashing would accompany such a movement, and this idea is perhaps more obviously conveyed by a precise rendering of the Hebrew, which does not exhibit even the slight distinction of a comma between the members of the clause,—"And there was a shaking (or commotion) as the bones came together, bone to his bone." The original term רַעַשׁ is indeed frequently used to denote an *earthquake*, as 1 Kings 19. 11, Am. 1. 1, Zech. 14. 5; but an *earthquake*, in its symbolical sense, denotes a political or ecclesiastical revolution, and if such a sense be recognized here, it still points to a grand national movement among the Jews at the period of the occurrences here predicted. This will be the natural, as it is clearly the purposed, result of the prophetic agency here shadowed forth. The first effect, indicated by the "voice," is probably to be witnessed among Christians. The valid and elaborate exposition of the Scriptural predictions relative to the destiny of Israel, will powerfully awaken the

interest, and work upon the sympathies, of Christendom. They will begin earnestly to inquire into the duties which may devolve upon them in reference to the sublime consummation that is to be brought about, and courts and cabinets will set their diplomacy at work to favor the designs of Providence. Crowned heads will ponder the burdens of the prophets, and their sovereign decretals will realize the thunders from the throne, whose mystic "voices" second and give efficacy to the inspired declarations.

The "shaking," on the other hand, indicates the effect produced upon the Jews. After ages of unbelieving apathy, they will begin to be roused by the prophetic utterances that salute their ears. More effective than any direct appeals from the pulpit—from which they for the most part obstinately estrange themselves—the expositions of their own prophetic Scriptures will come upon them with a power which they can neither gainsay nor resist. However much the Jews may be wedded to tradition, and however grievously the books of Moses and the prophets may have been neglected for the idle rhapsodies of the Talmud, yet who can doubt that the lively oracles, forming their canonical Scriptures, and flowing from an inspired source, will become the honored instrumentality by which their national regeneration shall be effected? If the burden of these announcements were menacing and afflictive—if they contained a "flying roll" of curses and wrath—we might more properly doubt of their gaining the audience or credence of the covenant people. But when they are in fact freighted with the promise of good—when their whole drift is to assure the Jews, upon the high authority of Jehovah himself, of the bestowment of the very blessings after which they have been so long blindly seeking—can the intelligent pondering of these prophecies fail to rouse them to an attitude of the most heedful regard to what is thus infallibly secured to them? Will it not cause a "shaking?" Will it not produce a concussion that shall agitate the whole mass as with the throes of a moral earthquake? Such unquestionably will be the result. Nor do we see room to doubt that the prominent men, the best informed of the body, will be among the leaders of the movement. Being the most familiar with the Hebrew language, they will be the best qualified to judge of the soundness of the proposed interpretations. And they can be reached by the press when there would be no hope of their coming within the sound of the voice of the living preacher. Tracts will be read where sermons would not be heard. In this way the truth will be propagated *ab intra*, among themselves, though the first impulse may be given from without. Christian interpreters, drawn to the more elaborate investigation of the Holy Scriptures, and delving into the depths of prophecy, will bring forth to the astonished eyes of their Jewish brethren, the treasures of an-

nouncement which they have for ages overlooked, disclosing their future prospects as a people. They will then perceive how infinitely superior are the riches of Revelation to the contemptible triflings of the Talmud, and how madly they have forsaken the crystal fountains of truth for the muddy streams of tradition. Asserting the prerogatives of men, they will dare to think for themselves. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," and under the promptings of the free spirit of inquiry, they will institute a most rigid inquest into the grounds of that authority which has been claimed for those Rabbinical dogmas which have set aside the teachings of Moses and the prophets. This awakened impulse of reason will spread from synagogue to synagogue, agitating the entire mass with a commotion hitherto unknown to it. Rents and schisms will ensue, sundering party from party, eliminating the liberal from the bigoted, and drawing down the thunders of Rabbinic denunciation upon the so-called innovators on the unity of the Jewish faith. Indeed, it is not too much to say that this "shaking" has already commenced. From different quarters of the Jewish world we hear the din of division. In the congregations of England, Germany, and Hungary, new schools are forming, and the adherents of the law arraying themselves, in growing numbers, in opposition to the blind sticklers for the traditions of the Elders. Even Judaism itself, the very type of every thing sacred and steadfast, is giving way before the liberalizing spirit of the age, like a mighty bulwark which at last yields to the unceasing action of the billows of the ocean. In the midst of this inevitable ferment of the Jewish mind the exposition of prophecy will undoubtedly come in as a new element of disturbance, and tend still more to precipitate the Karaites from the Pharisees. The result must unquestionably be a revolution throughout the great body of Israel, which shall in the end elevate the Scriptures and depress the Talmud. And the Scriptures, the more they are studied, the more will they excite. A new sensation will thrill the universal mass, and the prophetic announcements will be the grand means of their own fulfilment.

We can scarcely fail, from this view of the subject, to perceive the direction which all efforts for the conversion of the Jews should mainly take. It must be by the study, the exposition, and the application of their own prophecies, that their minds are to be arrested and their moral captivity brought to a close. It is in this form that an appeal is to be made directly to the governing intelligence of the nation. The time has gone by when the Christian world ought to be satisfied with individual conversions, here and there occurring, from among the obscurer members of the community. We are called upon to challenge the collective wisdom of the fathers of Israel to enter with us upon the calm investigation of the holy writings.

This must be done rather through the press than through the pulpit. We must spread our tracts before them; we must demand the refutation or the adoption of our views of the sense of the prophets; we must summon them to the field of argument, and say in the words of the Most High to Job, "gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me." Immense obstacles created by pride and prejudice may indeed stand in the way, but if there be truth in the oracles of God, the inveteracy of Jewish unbelief is yet destined to succumb to the force of evidence. Let but our own conviction of the high destiny that awaits them herald theirs, and the work is virtually accomplished. Let there be the 'voice,' and there will soon follow the 'shaking,' and the 'shaking' will be the sure precursor of the resuscitation.

VERSE VIII.

HEB.

וְרָאִיתִי וְהִנֵּה־עֲלֵיהֶם גִּידִים
וּבָשָׂר עָלָה וַיִּקְרַם וְעוֹר
מִלְמַעְלָה רוּחַ אֵין בָּהֶם׃

ENG. VERS.

And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ ἴδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ, ἐπ᾽ αὐτὰ νεῦρα καὶ σάρκες ἐφύοντο, καὶ ἀνέβαινεν ἐπ᾽ αὐτὰ δέρματα ἐπάνω, καὶ πνεύμα οὐκ ἦν ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῖς.

ENG. VERS.

And I saw, and behold, sinews and flesh grew upon them, and skin came up upon them above, and no breath was upon them.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And I saw, and behold, upon them sinews and flesh grew, and flesh was stretched over them above, and breath was not in them.

VULG. VERS.

Et vidi, et ecce super ea nervi et carnes ascenderunt; et extensa est in eis cutis desuper, et spiritum non habebant.

COMMENTARY.

8. *And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them.* Heb. רוּחַ. Gr. *πνεύμα*. The process of revivescence is as yet but partially completed. The bones have been built into skeletons, the skeletons clothed with sinews and flesh, and the flesh enveloped in skin. But still they are mere *bodies*, and not *men*. No pulsations of life throb beneath their "ribs of death." No motive power resides in their inert limbs. An immense multitude of exanimate corses, they lie prostrate on the ground, awaiting the quickening fiat which can alone infuse into them the vital breath, and thus complete the new creation.

The symbolical purport of all this, in its application to the Jews, we think it not very difficult to determine. It seems distinctly to convey the intimation, that a day of small things is to mark the commencement of Israel's restoration, whether considered in its *literal* or *spiritual* bearing; for, as we have already remarked, we cannot but conclude that both aspects of the event are contemplated in the present prophecy. Taken in the former sense, the imagery represents a very feeble and gradual beginning of a course of events, which is to issue in the most stupendous results. The dispersed and downcast remnant shall, one after another, turn their faces to Zion, and in sparse and scattered bands find their way to the land of their fathers. Thus shall "bone come to his bone;" one Jew shall meet another, entering from different quarters of the globe upon the predestined soil of Palestine. Urged by different motives, the natives of Poland, Germany, Holland, Spain, Africa, and the East shall drop in, in scattered groups, to the cities of Judah, with the hope of depositing their bones in the tombs of their patriarch fathers.

But in all this there is as yet no striking symptom of spiritual life. Here and there converted Jews may be found of the number of immigrants, attracted perhaps by the establishment of a Judeo-christian worship at Jerusalem, of which a beginning has already been made under the auspices of a dignitary of the English Church. Still they will be but "a feeble folk," and the mass of them being actuated by worldly, rather than by religious promptings, will but verify the mystic portraiture of the vision in presenting to the Christian eye the spectacle of a gathered multitude of human statues formed of flesh and blood, but devoid of animating breath. Indeed, it may safely be affirmed that this has hitherto been but too faithful an image of Jewish conversions. Even where there has been adequate ground for thinking charitably of the work of grace in their hearts, still the predominant character of Jewish piety has been timid, wavering, and weak. It has not been a piety of life and power. No specimen of the glowing ardor of a Paul has yet been witnessed. The converted Jew has seldom evinced a complete disenthralment from the yoke of Rabbinical bondage, even when baptized into the liberty of Christ. He has almost never appeared walking with erect front and firm tread upon the platform of Christianity. Reared under the unfriendly influences of the synagogue, he seems not to be at home in the precincts of the church. He is but slowly naturalized to his new citizenship, and though disposed to walk and to work under the guidance of Christian teachers, yet there is apparently but little that is spontaneous and independent in the goings forth of his better impulses. We do not say this by way of disparagement, nor in ignorance of the many causes which would naturally operate to prevent the converted Jew from rising to the loftiest form of Christian character. But we are safe in affirming the fact, and safe also,

we conceive, in the position, that a far higher order of piety is yet to be attained and exhibited by the believing sons of Abraham. They are yet to come under a dispensation of the Spirit, which shall be one of power on a large and magnificent scale. An energy and intensity of life shall be hereafter breathed into their religious character, which shall render them the brightest lights of Christendom, and realize in their full extent the words of the prophet, Zech. 12. 8, "And he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God." The quickening breath of the Holy Spirit is alone adequate to remove that moral asphyxia under which they labor. This will be the result of the crowning influence of the life-giving spirit here announced. All that has hitherto been done for them falls short of the effect that is yet to be produced when the dead bodies shall be endowed with the vital principle.

VERSE IX.

HEB.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הִנָּבֵא אֶל־הָרוּחַ
הִנָּבֵא בֶן־אָדָם וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל־הָרוּחַ
כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה מֵאַרְבַּע
רוּחוֹת בֹּאִי הָרוּחַ וּפְחִי בַּהֲרוּגִים
הָאֵלֶּה וְיִחְיוּ׃

ENG. VERS.

Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ εἶπε πρὸς μὲ, Προφήτευσον ἐπὶ τὸ πνεῦμα, προφήτευσον υἱὲ ἀνθρώπου, καὶ εἰπὸν τῷ πνεύματι, Τάδε λέγει Κύριος, Ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων πνευμάτων ἐλθὲ, καὶ ἐμφύσησον εἰς τοὺς νεκροὺς τούτους, καὶ ζήσατωσαν.

ENG. VERS.

And he said unto me, Prophesy upon (or concerning) the spirit (or wind), prophesy, son of man, and say to the spirit (or wind), Thus saith the Lord, Come from the four spirits (or winds), and blow upon these dead, and let them live.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And he said unto me, Prophesy to the spirit (or wind), prophesy, son of man, and say to the spirit (or wind), thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four spirits (or winds), and unto these slain, that they may live.

VULG. VERS.

Et dixit ad me, Vaticinare ad spiritum, vaticinare, fili hominis, et dices ad spiritum, Hæc dicit Dominus Deus, a quatuor ventis veni spiritus, et insuffla super interfectos istos, ut reviviscant.

COMMENTARY.

9. *Then he said unto me, Prophesy unto the wind.* Heb. הִנָּבֵא אֶל הָרוּחַ. It has been previously observed that the Heb. term רוּחַ is variously rendered *wind*, *breath*, or *spirit*, in different connexions. It is here the same word which is rendered in the context

by *spirit*, and it would perhaps be putting the English reader on the best ground for judging the true sense of the original to adhere uniformly to that rendering. Whether it is to be understood of the atmospherical element which we breathe, of the vital principle of the human body, of the intelligent and sentient spirit of man, or of the Holy Spirit of God, can only be determined by the connexion. How it is to be interpreted in the present passage will soon appear. We have already remarked that the phrase "prophesy *upon* the dry bones" properly imports, in this connexion, "prophesy *respecting* the dry bones;" and a similar import is doubtless to be recognized here also, which is distinctly warranted by the Greek, *προφήτευσον ἐπὶ τὸ πνεύμα*, *prophesy upon or concerning the Spirit*. The Syriac and Arabic give the same rendering. The most ample authority for this sense of the Hebrew particle may easily be adduced. Thus, Ezek. 13. 16, "The prophets of Israel which prophesy *concerning Jerusalem* (אֶל יְרוּשָׁלַם), and which see visions of peace," &c. 1 Sam. 1. 27, "*For this child* (אֶל הַנַּעַר הַזֶּה) I prayed," &c., i. e. concerning or with reference to this child. 2 Kings 19. 32, "Therefore thus saith the Lord *concerning the king of Assyria* (עַל מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר), he shall not come," &c. Is. 19. 11, "How say ye *unto Pharaoh* (אֶל פַּרְעֹה), I am the son of the wise," &c., i. e. concerning Pharaoh. Examples of this usage might be indefinitely multiplied. The case is too clear to admit of doubt, that the Spirit here spoken of is to be understood of the Holy Spirit. Consequently the prophet's being commanded to "prophesy concerning the Spirit," implies *his explaining those prophecies which relate to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God, in connexion with the event here shadowed forth.* At the same time, the tenor of the ensuing part of the verse makes it evident that the prophesying was in some way to be conducted in the form of an *invocation* to that same Spirit whose influences are to be employed in effecting the work. The grand duty enjoined in the words is undoubtedly that of *prayer;* but it is prayer of a somewhat peculiar character—which consists in an earnest pleading of those prophetic promises that assure the literal and spiritual restoration of Israel. One who prays for this object in the full faith of those predictions which announce it, may be said to prophesy both *to* and *concerning* the Spirit which is to be poured out from on high to give life to the dead.

Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. The view which we have above suggested of the import of this language presents a very interesting and momentous aspect of the whole subject. Considering Ezekiel as sustaining in this mystic

transaction a symbolical character, and representing the persons of those who, in subsequent ages, should be the accredited organs for giving utterance to the voice of the church, we are obviously taught that the mere argumentative development of the prophetic Scriptures announcing the future destinies of the Jews, is not sufficient to produce the "consummation so devoutly to be wished." However well adapted in themselves to arrest attention, and to awaken inquiry in the Jewish mind, the most luminous expositions of holy writ fall short of imparting spiritual life to the nation. They may sow the seeds of a national movement—they may, according to the burden of the vision, cause a shaking among the dry bones—but an inwrought energy from the Holy One of Israel is indispensable to that moral quickening of the inanimate mass which is requisite to their complete vivification. This influence is to be secured by *prayer*—prayer founded upon the express promises of Jehovah to this effect—in a word, *prophetic prayer*—and this, too, throughout the bounds of the Christian world. The reviving spirit is to come from "the four winds of heaven," or from the four quarters of the earth, in answer to the prayers which shall be preferred by the faithful from all the various regions of their habitation. Every department of Zion is to be enlisted in this work of supplication, and to contribute its respective quota of hallowed agency in drawing down the influences of the Spirit upon the morally defunct multitudes of the house of Israel. As scattered portions of this people are to be found in every region of the globe where Christianity is established, so from the Christians of every region are those prophetic intercessions to ascend to the ears of the Lord God of Sabbaoth; and the fact that the objects of their petitions are before their eyes in all the eloquent and affecting necessities of their condition will, no doubt, go to add an increased fervency and intensity to their suit.

We know of nothing, then, that ought to operate with more imperative conviction upon the minds of Christians than the fact conveyed by this mystic scenery, that the regeneration of the Jews is to be effected mainly by the instrumentality of *expounded prophecy* and *fervent prayer*. These are the two great means on which we are to rely for the promised result. Without derogating in the least from the ordinance of *preaching*, in its common acceptation, as a means of evangelization, we may still maintain, that the case of the Jews is so peculiar—the Gospel encounters in them an attitude of mind so unique and distinguishing—that we cannot anticipate those legitimate effects from that source for which we are authorized to look in the case of other people—a remark which holds true, to a certain extent, of the Mohammedans also. In regard to both there is a prior admission, through a perverse inter-

pretation, of the great facts and doctrines of the Old Testament Scriptures. They have neither of them need, like the heathen nations, to be taught what are "the first elements of the doctrine of Christ," and this circumstance rather increases than diminishes the difficulty of bringing them to the acknowledgment of the saving truth of the Gospel. In this emergency, *prayer* is the grand resort of the Christian church. The arm of Omnipotence must be earnestly invoked to put forth its constraining power upon the people of the covenant; and prayer, the texture of which is wrought of the prophetic promises of the word, will avail to secure the blessing. "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit; they are created."

The term *slain* (חֲלָלִים) is not probably intended to designate with much precision the manner in which the multitude originally came to "the dust of death." The Greek renders it simply by *τοὺς νεκροὺς τούτους, these dead*, with which the Arabic agrees. It is undoubtedly equivalent to *dead, mortuos*, as Rosenmüller renders it, remarking at the same time that it is parallel to the expression Jer. 19. 21, חֲרְגֵי מָוֶת *the slain of death*, in contradistinction to those slain by the sword. Thus too with the kindred term Ps. 86. 5, "From among the dead, like the *slain* (חֲרוּגִים) that lie in the grave;" i. e. simply the deceased, without reference to the manner in which they came to their death.

VERSE X.

HEB.

וְהִנַּבֵּאתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּנִי וַתָּבוֹא בָהֶם הָרוּחַ וַיִּחְיוּ וַיַּעַמְדוּ עַל־רַגְלֵיהֶם חַיִל גָּדוֹל מְאֹד מְאֹד׃

ENG. VERS.

So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ προεφήτευσα καθότι ἐνετείλατό μοι, καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς αὐτοὺς τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ ἔζησαν, καὶ ἔστησαν ἐπι τῶν ποδῶν αὐτῶν, συναγωγὴ πολλὴ σφόδρα.

ENG. VERS.

And I prophesied as he commanded me, and the spirit entered into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great assembly.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And I prophesied as he commanded me, and the spirit entered into them, and they lived, and they stood upon their feet, an army exceeding great.

VULG. VERS.

Et prophetavi sicut præceperat mihi; et ingressus est in ea spiritus, et vixerunt; steteruntque super pedes suos, exercitus grandis nimis valde.

COMMENTARY.

10. *So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding*

great army. The action of the prophet in the symbolic machinery is sufficiently obvious. With the clew already obtained we pass from the shadow to the substance. As the duty enjoined upon him is really that which devolves upon us in these latter ages of the world, so we read in the result which crowned his *prophetic prayer* the blessing that will also follow ours. The bestowment of spiritual life on a large and glorious scale will accrue to the Jews in proportion as the promises to that effect are believingly pleaded. And this result we suppose to be intimated in the language of Paul, Rom. 11. 15, in express allusion to the very Scripture we are now considering: "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but *life from the dead?*" As the same Spirit presided over the inditing of all parts of the inspired word, and as the New Testament is but a development of the interior senses of the Old, nothing is more natural than that a running, though often a tacit, allusion should be kept up in the writings of the apostles to those of the prophets. Paul speaks of the ingathering of Israel into the church of Christ as an expositor of Moses and the later prophets, who have unequivocally announced the same grand issue. It is no more then than is to be expected, that the language which he employs should often be such as to refer us at once to the terms of the original predictions, and when he speaks in the passage quoted of the conversion of the Jews as the reception of life by the dead, with what portion of the ancient oracles do we more spontaneously connect it than with the vision of Ezekiel, where the same event is figuratively set forth by the resurrection of the dead to life?

But let us follow out the main idea a little more in detail. The leading intimation undoubtedly is, that the conversion of Israel is to be effected mainly by the bringing to bear upon this object the scope of the inspired predictions which relate to it. These are of a twofold character. (1.) Those which announce their restoration. (2.) Those which foretell the outpouring of the reviving Spirit of the Lord upon them. It is by no means to be supposed that the prophecies of Ezekiel alone are alluded to in this connexion. He, as we have already remarked, is to be regarded as acting in this visionary transaction in a representative character. His agency foreshadows that of his successors who should sustain in their persons the persons of the members of the church, in whose name they officiate, in coming periods of time, when the actual accomplishment of the event was to be expected. The means to be employed is the exposition and application of prophecy, i.e. of all the various prophecies scattered through the writings of the former and the latter seers. Of these it is obvious on inspection that a large portion distinctly announce the effusion of the Holy Spirit in the latter day, and in connexion

with their restoration, upon the house of Israel. With these dispersed oracles the stewards of the mysteries of God, and those to whom they minister, are to become familiar, and by incorporating them into the substance of their prayers, are to prophesy to the wind, breath, or Spirit of the Lord, to form a plea which the divine counsels will forbid to be unavailing. In these it is undoubtedly true that the prophecy of Ezekiel is peculiarly rich, but the same note is struck, in multitudes of instances, by the harps of the other prophets. From the whole collectively we may adduce the following as specimens: Ezek. 11. 19, "And I will give them one heart, *and I will put a new spirit within you;* and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Ch. 36. 24—26, "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and *a new spirit will I put within you.*" Ch. 26. 27, "*And I will put my Spirit within you,* and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Is. 32. 13, 15, "Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers, yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city;—*until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high,* and the wilderness be a fruitful field." Zech. 12. 10, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, *the spirit of grace and supplications;* and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born."

These are among the prophetic pleadings with which the throne of grace is to be solicited, and the reviving 'Spirit' of the Lord to be invoked. It is by the citation of these and similar predictions that the servants of the Most High are to prophesy *to* and *concerning* the divine 'wind,' which can alone blow a quickening breath upon the slain multitudes. The result is emphatically indicated by the words that follow: "and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army," or as the original more expressively has it—"an army great exceedingly, exceedingly." How insignificant compared with this will be all prior successes in the line of Jewish conversions! If in the primitive days of the church one Apostle could say to another, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe," how will the heart of Christian benevolence swell to see the grow-

ing numbers counted by hundreds of thousands, when "the day of the Lord shall be great in Jezreel?" "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear, break forth in singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited."

THE INTERPRETATION.

VERSE XI.

HEB.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בֶּן־אָדָם הָעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה כָּל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵמָּה הִנֵּה אֹמְרִים יָבְשׁוּ עַצְמוֹתֵינוּ וְאָבְדָה תִקְוָתֵנוּ נִגְזַרְנוּ לָנוּ׃

ENG. VERS.

Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ ἐλαλήση Κύριος πρὸς μὲ, λέγων, Υἱε ἀνθρώπου, τὰ ὀστᾶ ταῦτα πᾶς οἶκος Ἰσραὴλ ἐστι, καὶ αὐτοὶ λέγουσι, Ξηρὰ γέγονε τὰ ὀστᾶ ἡμῶν, ἀπόλωλεν ἡ ἐλπὶς ἡμῶν, διαπεφωνήκαμεν.

ENG. VERS.

And the Lord spake unto me, saying, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel, and they say, Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, we have expired.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And he said unto me, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, our hope is cut off, and we have perished.

VULG. VERS.

Et dixit ad me, Fili hominis, ossa hæc universa, domus Israel est; ipsi dicunt, Aruerunt ossa nostra, et perit spes nostra, abscissi sumus.

COMMENTARY.

11. *Then said he unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.* In view of the peculiar and striking character of the imagery employed in the present vision, the reader cannot but feel that nothing would be more desirable than a divine declaration of its import; and with such a declaration we are here furnished. Upon an authority perfectly infallible we are assured that the substance of the shadowed *materiel* of the vision is "the whole house of Israel;" that is, the great mass, the major portion of the covenanted race; just as Paul when he says, Rom. 11, 26, "and so all Israel shall be saved," means not each and every individual of the nation, but the bulk of it. And it is worthy of notice in this connexion, that it is one of the most familiar of the Talmudical sayings, that "all Israel hath a share in the world to come;" i. e. in the Messiah's dispensation. However applicable the depicted scenery may be in itself to the condition in which the gospel finds the great mass of men, and however well adapted to represent the state of Christian congregations under a general dearth of spiritual influences, from which they need to be powerfully resuscitated, yet nothing is clearer than that its direct, designed, and legitimate drift is to symbolize the political and moral position of the literal Israel at the time to which the spirit of prophecy points. We cannot conceive that the canons of sound interpretation will allow the putting of any sense upon the language which would preclude a primary adumbration of the literal house of Israel in its long continued, deplorable, and apparently hopeless depression. Accordingly, if the literal race of Israel is here designated, it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion, that a literal restoration is with equal explicitness taught in the vision. Thus also Ezek. 11. 17, "Therefore say, thus saith the Lord, I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel." Again, Ezek. 39. 25–29, "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out

my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." The positive assurance—"neither will I hide my face any more from them"—demonstrates that the fulfilment is yet future, for nothing is more notorious than that the Jews have been under the hidings of God's face for centuries past.

If we feel ourselves at liberty then to evaporate the solid substances here submitted to us into airy phantoms in the alembic of a spiritualizing interpretation, what portion of holy writ can plead exemption from the same process? The Grotian mode of solution, which turns the whole into an emblematic device designed to set forth the reinstatement of the Jews in the enjoyment of *civil* privileges, in their own land, after the return under the decree of Cyrus, though inadequate, may yet be tolerated as preserving the substantial truth of the imagery of the bones; but what favor can be shown to a construction that entirely merges the original express subject of the vision in some arbitrary spiritual creation, for which no adequate authority, no satisfactory reasonings, can be adduced? To make the house of Israel here a typical term for the Christian church, is very like making the figurative resurrection of the dry bones a proof direct of the general resurrection of the dead. The following extract from "Begg's Connected View," p. 19, has a pertinency in this relation which cannot be mistaken.

"If these predictions do not prove the future restoration of the literal Israel to the land of their fathers, it may certainly be asked, In what language *could* such a promise be made, that would not be equally liable to be misapplied, perverted, or discredited? We may as well deny the literal *conversion* as the literal *restoration* of Israel—most of the passages which assure us of the one, predicting also the other. If it was not a figurative dispersion they suffered, neither will it be a figurative restoration they shall enjoy. And if dispersion was a part of the punishment of their national transgression, so also will restoration be obtained when forgiven of the Lord, and will be connected with their national repentance. And how wonderfully has the Lord preserved the Jews for this display of His sovereignty and grace! Although scattered into every nation of Europe, —nay, attracted into every country under heaven into which commerce has been introduced—and possessed, as many of them are, of immense wealth—they have not been allowed to become the proprietors of any soil. They have no inheritance in other lands, and they have always cherished a passionate desire to return to their own. Throughout their long captivity, they have been thus kept unsubjected to the influence of other local attachments, and in a state of constant readiness for migration; and recent movements among them render it highly probable that the time of their general departure is at hand. By the dispensations of His providence, the Lord is manifestly preparing the way for their return. In the plenitude of their uncontrolled power, earthly potentates may indeed combine, and, with a view to perpetuate their systems of iniquity, may create kingdoms at will, allot to them the territories they shall possess, and appoint the kings by whom they shall be governed, without asking counsel of the Lord, or regulating their decisions by His 'sure decree.' In all their

calculations, Israel may not be reckoned; in their disposal of territory, no portion may be assigned for *their* inheritance. But the God of Jacob 'has purposed, and who shall disannul it?' 'Zion shall be redeemed with judgments, and her converts with righteousness.' 'But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.' Is. i. 27. Ezek. xxxvi. 8."

The parallelisms of prophecy are all important in any exegetic process. They do not always lie upon the surface of Scripture, like the bones spread over the face of the visionary valley. But a studious inquest will frequently reveal them, and we rejoice over them as one that has found great spoil. In regard to the present oracle, we believe it is to be brought into juxtaposition with two or three passages in the other prophets which are seldom viewed in this connexion. Of these the following stands conspicuous: Is. 66. 14, "And when ye see this your heart shall rejoice, and *your bones shall flourish like an herb.*" The connected words have only to be read to convince any one that the period referred to is precisely that which is contemplated in the present vision, as it is the prediction of a day when Jerusalem, or the Jewish nation, is to be signally honored, and "peace extended to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream." Most intimately related to this is another passage of the same prophet, and referring to the same time, ch. 26. 12—19, where the subject of the prophecy is undoubtedly the Jews in the latter ages. Vitringa, Michaelis, and other expositors are satisfied that it does not refer to the period of the Babylonish captivity, though that may have given *occasion* to the peculiar style of announcement adopted. After putting into their lips the acknowledgment, "O Lord our Lord, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name," they go on to say, that these their former enemies and masters "are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise; therefore thou hast visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish." They then proceed, by way of contrasting their own more privileged lot with that of their oppressors, to declare in an address to the Most High, and in the language of firm assurance, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." This is all but universally conceded to be the foreshowing not of a literal but of a figurative resurrection. Their resuscitation, as Mr. Barnes remarks, (in loc.) imports that "they shall be restored to their country, and be reinstated in all their rights and immunities as a people among the nations of the earth. This restoration shall be as striking as would be a resurrection of the dead from their graves. Though therefore this

does not refer primarily to the resurrection of the dead, yet the illustration is drawn from that doctrine, and implies that that doctrine was one with which they were familiar." As to the connected phrases Mr. B. further remarks, "they may be rendered *my deceased, my dead*, and will thus be parallel with the phrase, 'thy dead men,' and is used in the same sense with reference to the same species of resurrection. It is not the language of the prophet Isaiah, as if he referred to his own body when it should be dead, but it is the language of the *choir* that sings and that speaks in the name of the Jewish people. *That people* is thus introduced as saying, '*my* dead,' that is, '*our* dead,' shall rise. Not only in the address to Jehovah is this sentiment uttered, when it is said, '*thy* dead shall rise;' but when the attention is turned to themselves as a people they say '*our* dead shall rise;' those that appertain to our nation shall rise from the dust, and be restored to their own privileges and land."

As the imagery then of the two prophets is perfectly tantamount, we see no good reason to doubt that both predictions refer to the same event; and we believe we may safely interpret Dan. 12. 2, of the same period and the same accomplishment: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt;" implying that that which was a national restoration to all, should be a spiritual resurrection only to a part. The rest, by abiding in unbelief, should incur a doom of woe and wrath commensurate with the blessings which they forfeited. The mention of the 'dew,' as the emblem of the reviving influence by which the morally dead are resuscitated, and consequently of the Spirit of God, the true agent, naturally reminds us of other passages which this term is a connecting link to bind together in union with the present. Thus Hos. 14. 15, "I will be *as the dew* unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and shoot forth his roots as Lebanon." This, from the context, can be referred to no period so properly as to the final restoration of Israel, as the declaration immediately preceding is, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him." When shall this be realized but in the day of Jacob's redemption? Again, Is. 18. 4, "For so the Lord said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling-place (Marg. I will regard my set dwelling), like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a *cloud of dew* in the heat of harvest." This refers to the time when an ensign is to be lifted up upon the mountains, and the great trumpet blown (comp. Is. 27. 13), and "the present brought unto the Lord of hosts, of a people scattered and peeled, and terrible (venerable) from the beginning, to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the Mount Zion." This is

unquestionably the future return of the dispersed of Israel to their own land. Once more, Mic. 5. 7, "And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people *as a dew from the Lord*, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men." When the 'dew' of divine influence has revived them, they shall themselves become as a renovating 'dew' to the heathen nations, among whom they shall sojourn, and in whose conversion they shall be instrumental. Thus strikingly do we find the present prophecy ramified in its connexions with various other portions of the Scriptures, all bearing on the same great and glorious issue.

Behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost. Heb. אָבְדָה תִקְוָתֵנוּ, *our expectation is perished.* Gr. *ἀπόλωλεν ἡ ἐλπὶς ἡμῶν, our hope has perished.* Nothing could be more appropriate to express the burden of despondency which the depressed, afflicted, down-trodden condition of the Jews has for ages put into their lips. They are a people sick with hope deferred. The accumulation of their sufferings in all ages since the crucifixion has impressed a character of grief and depression upon their nation, and the tone of sorrow, lamentation, and woe, pervades all their utterances as a people. Continually expecting their Messiah, yet continually disappointed, they present a living image of despair. Withered, bowed, woe-begone, they evince an inner consciousness, which they do not seldom express, that the curse and blight of heaven is upon them. A dispirited, downcast, and mournful air, is the very national costume of the Jew. Wherever found they are marked by this characteristic, and that too just in proportion to the degree in which they are imbued with the true spirit and genius of Judaism, and are conscientious in the performance of its rites. The true devotee of the Talmud always presents the aspect of one who is weighed down by the yoke of ceremonies, and oppressed with the mournful lot of his people. He wears the demeanor of one who is incessantly engaged in fruitless attempts to solve the problem of the long-continued sufferings of his race, and the language of the text is the language of his condition, even when his lips refuse utterance to the despairing words. It is virtually the language which the prophet attributes to them in the parallel prediction already considered, Is. 26. 17—18, "Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have, as it were, brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth." This from age to age has been the dominant mental state of these "tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast." That hope which comes to all, comes not to them, after the lapse of centuries of sore disap-

pointment. It has sunk to its last expiring gleam in their bosoms, and they find no solace in the prospect of the future. Their perpetual unuttered apostrophe is, "O God, why hast thou cast us off forever? why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?—We see not our signs; there is no more any prophet; neither is there any among us that knoweth how long." It is while groaning under the pressure of this calamity that the reviving message embodied in this prediction is to reach their inmost souls. In the midnight depths of their darkness this morning-star of hope is to arise. It is the wont of the divine benignity to take occasion from the extremest straits of his people to illustrate the riches of his grace. He that scattered Israel will yet gather him again, and though the mercy promised is not irrespective of their faith in the Messiah of the Gospel, yet their past unbelief shall not preclude the exercise of that sovereignty of beneficence which secures their future blessedness.

We are cut off for our parts. Heb. נִגְזַרְנוּ לָנוּ *we are cut off for us*, or *for ourselves.* The pronominal adjection לָנוּ *for us, for ourselves*, seems designed to give a peculiar emphasis to the term denoting their cutting off. Rosenmüller remarks that this is often the effect of the appending of pronouns in this manner by the medium of the preposition ל *to* or *for*. It is as if it were said, considered in ourselves—viewed as to our own ability or sufficiency—we are completely cut off; we lie as withered branches severed from the parent trunk, and have no inherent power to recover ourselves again to life and vigor. The language will at once clothe itself with fuller significance when we advert to the true import of the original word for "cut off." The Heb. גָּזַר properly and naturally denotes that kind of cutting which takes place when the branch of a tree is severed from the stock, and accordingly the term in that language for *axe* is מַגְזֵרָה, a direct derivative from this root. The idea of *pruning* is one that comes properly under the radical, and its metaphorical usage may be seen from the following examples: 2 Chron. 26.21, "And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several (separated) house, being a leper; for *he was cut off* (נִגְזַר) from the house of the Lord." Is. 53. 8, "For *he was cut off* (נִגְזַר) from the land of the living." In the following passages the word is brought into closer connexion with the present, as we may suppose the language to be that of a kind of prophetic plaint uttered by the Jews, in the persons of their typical representatives, David and Jeremiah, in the depths of their national distresses. Ps. 88. 3—5, "For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am as a man that hath no strength; free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more; and *they are cut*

off (נִגְזַרְתִּי) from thy hand." Lam. 3. 54, "Waters flowed over my soul; then I said, *I am cut off* (נִגְזַרְתִּי־)." But a still more striking illustration of the force of the term is to be seen in its parallelism with the language of Paul, Rom. 11. 6—24, where he speaks of unbelieving Israel as the natural branches *cut off* from their own olive-tree, but destined, in the counsels of God, to be again graffed in, and to partake of the sap and fatness of their native stock;—a passage in which we are no doubt to recognize a covert allusion to the very phrase which the Spirit here employs. Such striking concealed links of connexion between different parts of the inspired Scriptures are continually disclosing themselves to the diligent student of the original, and form to his mind an argument perfectly irrefragable of the identity of that intelligence and of the unity of that drift which pervades the whole. Thus, in relation to the imagery here employed, where the scattered bones and the dissevered and withered branches form its prominent materials, it is not a little remarkable that the Psalmist, no doubt in a prophetic vein, and in relation to the same subject, has grouped together precisely the same emblems: Ps. 141. 7, "Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth." We must admit, indeed, that the image is that of chips made by the wood-cutter, to which the scattered and whitened bones are compared, but still our previous explanations show that the approximation is sufficiently close to bring the one into significant parallelism with the other. Another prophet, in portraying the extremities of Jewish degradation and misery in their dispersion, uses the same figure: Lam. 4. 8, "Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets; their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered; *it is become as a stick;*" i. e. like a branch exscinded from the tree and withered. The language here attributed to the desolate and down-trodden race of Israel is in effect very strikingly embodied in the despairing accents of Job, ch. 19. 10: "He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone; *and mine hope hath he removed like a tree;*" i. e. like a tree cut down and left to dry and rot upon the ground. Indeed, as nearly every item which history records of the abject condition of the Jews in all ages since their dispersion is matter of the minutest specification of prophecy, so we may consider the Lamentations of Jeremiah as a continued echo to those plaints of despondency and woe which are reduced to a compend in the passage before us. The whole drift and burden of its pathetic stanzas is the utterance of that sentiment of sadness, hopelessness, and desolation which breathes in the language that the Most High here ascribes to the sons of the covenant: "Behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts." With this burden the language of the modern Jews at Jerusalem, as related by Dr. Wolff, remarkably agrees:—

Rabbin. On account of the palace which is laid waste
People. We sit lonely and weep.
R. On account of the temple which is destroyed;
P. We sit lonely and weep.
R. On account of the walls which are pulled down;
P. We sit lonely and weep.
R. On account of the priests who have stumbled;
P. We sit lonely and weep.
R. On account of the kings who have despised Him;
P. We sit lonely and weep.
R. We beseech thee to have mercy upon Zion;
P. Gather the children of Jerusalem.
R. Make haste, O Redeemer of Zion;
P. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem.
R. Remember the shame of Zion;
P. Remember again the ruins of Jerusalem.
R. May the royal government shine on Zion;
P. Comfort those who mourn at Jerusalem.

VERSE XII.

HEB.

לָכֵן הִנָּבֵא וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם כֹּה־
אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הִנֵּה אֲנִי פֹתֵחַ
אֶת־קִבְרוֹתֵיכֶם וְהַעֲלֵיתִי אֶתְכֶם
מִקִּבְרוֹתֵיכֶם עַמִּי וְהֵבֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם
אֶל־אַדְמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל

ENG. VERS.

Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

GR. OF LXX.

Διατοῦτο προφήτευσον, καὶ εἰπὸν, Τάδε λέγει Κύριος, Ἰδοὺ, ἐγὼ ἀνοίγω τὰ μνήματα ὑμῶν, καὶ ἀνάξω ὑμᾶς ἐκ τῶν μνημάτων ὑμῶν, καὶ εἰσάξω ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν γὴν τοῦ Ἰσραήλ.

ENG. VERS.

Wherefore prophesy, and say, These things saith the Lord, Behold, I open your graves, and will bring you from your graves, and will bring you into the land of Israel.

TARG. OF JONATHAN

Wherefore prophesy, and say unto them, These things saith the Lord God, Behold, I will open your sepulchres and cause you to go up from your sepulchres, O my people, and will bring you into the land of Israel.

VULG. VERS.

Proptera vaticinare, et dices ad eos, Hæc dicet Dominus Deus, Ecce ego aperiam tumulos vestros, et educam vos de sepulchris vestris, populus meus; et inducam vos in terram Israel.

COMMENTARY.

Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Behold, O my people, &c. The reflection at once suggested by these words is that of the persisting favor with which God regards the seed of Abraham, notwithstanding the apostacy which has accumulated their afflictions

upon them. The endearing appellation—"my people"—evinces that they are still his—his in covenant—"by an emphasis of interest his"—although they have forfeited all the privileges of that relation by their protracted rebellion, and though in the estimation of the mass, it may be, of the Christian church, they are regarded as outcasts and aliens who have no longer any federative interest in the promises made to Abraham. This phraseology will be seen to possess more force in this relation by contrasting it with that of certain passages that have an air of repudiation grounded upon the displeasure which their transgressions had occasioned. Thus Ex. 32. 7, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for *thy people*, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves," &c. So also Ezek. 13. 17, "Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of *thy people*, which prophesy out of their own heart, and prophesy thou against them." We perceive in this a tone of alienation, as though God would not deign to recognize a covenant relation to his people, entirely at variance with the tenor of his address in the present passage. We are probably not in error in supposing that Christians, for the most part, deem the ancient covenant made with Israel as virtually abolished since their rejection of the Messiah, and that although not precluded from forgiveness upon acting faith in the Gospel, yet they must come into the fold of Christ upon precisely the same terms with Gentile believers, casting away all reference to any covenant relations which may formerly have distinguished their fathers. This is indeed true in one sense—that the Jew as well as the Gentile is to be saved only by faith in a Messiah who has come—but with the clear assurances of holy writ before us we see not how the evidence can be resisted, that the Jews are yet a covenant people, and that as such they are to be re-incorporated into the fold of the faithful. On what other grounds does Jehovah here address the Jews as *his* people, notwithstanding their outcast attitude? The absolute perpetuity of the covenant made with Abraham can alone afford the solution: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession." This is the covenant of which Paul says, that the law delivered at Sinai four hundred and thirty years afterwards did not annul it; and this is confirmed through the prophet Jeremiah in the most express terms: "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of Hosts is his name; if these ordinances depart from before

me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever." Again, "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips."

I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. This is clearly but an amplification, in somewhat varied phrase, of the leading promise of the present inspired oracle. It is indeed true that we are to recognize a slight inroad upon the symmetry of the symbol in the intimation, that the mystic bones are to be brought out of graves or sepulchres, whereas they had previously been represented as lying promiscuously strewed over the surface of the ground. Of this Rosenmüller remarks, *Ego in hac dissimilitudine hærendum non puto.* He plainly regards it of little or no consequence in its bearings on the general burden of the prediction. The object of the Spirit is beyond question to present the helpless and hopeless condition of the subject in the strongest light, and therefore he uses the most emphatic terms. No state more remote from life and activity can be conceived than that of arid bones reposing in the depths of the sepulchre. Such an image, accordingly, would be pre-eminently adapted to set forth the amazing stretch of omnipotence requisite to raise the Jews from their entombment as a nation, and to invest them with the prerogatives of a renewed and sanctified humanity. This is obviously the scope of the symbolic assurance, which differs not at all from that of the preceding portions of the vision already elucidated. The purpose mentioned at the close of the verse, of bringing them into the land of Israel, is not to be considered as exhausting the full design of their resuscitation. This indeed is as unequivocally announced as could be compassed by the power of language, but this is not the ultimate end which infinite wisdom aims to accomplish. A higher purpose is their recovery to spiritual life, which is more clearly disclosed in the fourteenth verse. Did our limits permit we should be much inclined to go into an extended investigation of Is. 25. 7—9, with a view to show its entire parallelism with the burden of the present prophecy: "He will destroy (בִּלַּע *swallow up*) in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up (בִּלַּע) death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." The period here referred to is undoubtedly that of the blissful consummation with which the restoration of Israel is to synchronize,

the golden age of the world, to be ushered in by the introduction of the New Jerusalem, as identical with the *mountain kingdom* which, after smiting and demolishing the image of all worldly despotisms, is to grow and fill the earth. The "face of the covering cast over all people" is a highly metaphorical expression for that veil of ignorance, error, and unbelief, which rests in a distinguished manner upon the Jewish mind, and which Paul assures us, 2 Cor. 3. 16, is to be done away when that people shall turn to the Lord; but which also clouds more or less the mental perception of the Gentile races. Piscator supposes the phrase to be equivalent, by hypallage, to "covering of the face," and that the allusion is to the winding sheets which are wrapped about the bodies and faces of the dead when laid out for burial. The absorption of the veil is, accordingly, its casting off by the spiritually dead, and their resurrection to spiritual life. The swallowing up of death, in like manner, is but another form of expressing the same idea, and is parallel to the "life from the dead," of which the apostle speaks, Rom. 11. 15, as the result of the receiving again of the Jews. That it cannot allude to the *final* abolition of death, at the close of all things, is evident from the context, where events are clearly spoken of as subsequent to this event, which suppose the continuance of time and natural mortality. The intimation is to our minds very obvious, that the removal of the mystic veil from the eyes of the Jews is the signal of a similar event to other nations, which shall receive a glorious illumination from the accomplishment of the prophetic destinies of Israel. But upon the proof of this, by a labored exegetical process, we cannot now enter.

It is ever to be borne in mind that the fulfilment of prophecy is effected by the *ordinary* course of Providence, in which the agents act from appropriate motives, and without the express design of accomplishing the purposes of Heaven. When the Most High accordingly declares that he will bring the house of Israel into their own land, it does not follow that this will be effected by any miraculous interposition which will be recognized as such. Nothing more is implied than that it will be so ordered in Providence that motives will be furnished for such a return, appealing it may be to the worldly and selfish principles of the Jewish mind. It is by no means improbable that the affairs of the nations, or the progress of civilization, may take such a turn as to offer to the Jews the same carnal inducements to remove to Syria, as now prompt them to migrate to this country. Indeed when we consider the force of national predilections naturally operating with that people, and drawing them with a mighty attraction to their paternal soil, we can scarcely doubt, that a much less degree of worldly inducement will suffice to turn their faces and their footsteps thither than to any other

region of the earth. It does not appear, therefore, that any special duty of Christians is involved in this predicted lot of Israel, except so far as governmental action may be requisite in removing the political obstacles that stand in the way of the event. Farther than this we do not perceive that Christian interference is called for. The Jews may be safely left to themselves to carry out, under their own promptings, the accomplishment of their own destiny in this respect. The great work of Christians, in the mean time, is to labor for their conversion. In this they are undoubtedly authorized to look for a considerable measure of success, though it be admitted that the bulk of the nation is not to be converted till after their restoration; for it is only upon the coming together of bone to his bone that the Spirit of life comes into them, and they stand up an exceeding great army.

We are well aware that a multitude of queries may be started relative to the ultimate *end* to be compassed by the event here announced. The question of the *cui bono* is a very natural one to be urged in this connexion. To this we may very properly reply, that our inability to discover an adequate end of such a movement of Providence is not sufficient to countervail the evidence of the fact, provided that fact be made out by a logical competency of proof. Our business is with the *evidence of the fact*, and until the evidence which we have adduced from the present and kindred prophecies be overthrown, we see no grounds to be troubled on the score of the *reasons* by which the divine counsels are governed. We are at best but poorly qualified to sit in judgment upon the ultimate purposes of the Most High. Their fathomless depths mock the soundings of reason's profoundest plummet. In how many instances, in his past dispensations, has God brought the course of events to issues which would never have entered into the imagination of men or angels? Were the whole hierarchy of heaven to be empannelled in one grand jury of inquest on the final aims of any one of the divine proceedings, how easily might their findings be baffled! We say, then, that arguments drawn from human ignorance are not properly to be arrayed against conclusions to which we are brought by a legitimate train of proof. The true question is, whether God hath said that he will do it. Our object has been to show that he has; and if we have succeeded in this, our conclusion must stand, whether we can see the reasons of it or not. Every sound principle of hermeneutics reclaims against a construction of the prophet's language which would turn it into some vague and mystical allusion of a purely *spiritual* import, involving nothing of a literal sense.

As we read the lively oracles we gather, indeed, no intimation that there is to be, properly speaking, any *new* dispensation to be accorded to man on the earth. But there may doubtless be new

phases or features of the present Christian dispensation in the ages of coming time. The development of the grand destinies of Christianity may very possibly be of an exceedingly strange and astounding character; and if we could fully grasp them from our present position, they would perhaps fill us with an astonishment similar to that which would have struck the mind of an ancient Israelite, could he have looked forward some few centuries, and have seen the entire abolition of Judaism with its gorgeous rites—its smoking altars —its mitred priests—and its varied services. As the sublime counsels of Jehovah go into accomplishment, they often present themselves in new aspects, so that while they actually realize the very letter of prophecy that was before our eyes, we are at the same time filled with overwhelming wonder at the glory of the truth, and at our own obtuseness in not previously perceiving it.

In the present case, however, we can well conceive that one purpose of immense moment may be answered by such an event as the literal return of the Jews to the land of their fathers; and that is the effect it shall have on the conversion of the world. It will not only rend the veil from a thousand prophecies, hitherto wrapped in obscurity, but it will give a new and irresistible impulse to the moral conquest of the nations. The simple contemplation of the fact, that the seed of Jacob, after centuries of dispersion, oppression, and misery, are, in exact accordance with the letter of inspiration, brought again to their own borders, and invested with pre-eminent dignities and favors, will of itself exert a moral influence such as we can now but inadequately conceive. Infidelity will be silenced for ever, and the world struck dumb by the occurrence of a virtual *theophany* made manifest before their eyes. When the Most High descended in all the pomp of the Godhead upon the flaming summit of Sinai, and there delivered his law and avouched the seed of Jacob as his peculiar people, the transaction occurred in an obscure region of the earth, far removed from the eyes of the rest of the world, who little dreamt of the sublime exhibition that was then making to a comparative handful of the human race. But the event we are now considering will be as conspicuous as the other was latent. It will occur in the full view of the whole civilized world. It will blaze with notoriety. It will flash a splendid demonstration upon all kindreds and tongues of the truth of revelation, which no sophistry can elude, no obduracy resist. "The way," says Mr. Bickersteth, "in which the restoration of the Jews will affect all nations is becoming increasingly evident from facts that are arising before our eyes and from the dispersion of the Jews among all nations. Where have they not been scattered, and into what part of the earth have they not been meted out? They are spread over the East. They pervade each kingdom of the Western Roman

empire. Russia, and Poland, and Prussia, have millions of Jews. The last Russian census gives 1,080,224 Jews in Russia, apart from Poland. Africa and America are not without them. How can they be gathered from the Niger to the Volga; from remotest China in the East, to Portugal in the West, and from each accessible country of North and South America, without moving every land, and making known throughout the world the wonderful works of God?" (*Restor. of the Jews*, p .221.)

But this is not all. A christianized Judaism will not remain an inert element in the system of influences which are destined to transform the moral aspect of mankind. The law is yet appointed to go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. The same predictions which secure the return of the Jews to the land of their fathers, and their conversion to the faith of Christ, enwrap also the intimation that they shall spontaneously assume the work of propagating the knowledge of that Messiah whom they have been so tardy in confessing. Provoked to a holy jealousy by the prior labors of the Gentiles in this behalf, and nerved by the zeal of men who have been called into the vineyard at the eleventh hour, they will rush upon the work of the world's evangelization with the glowing ardor of those "living creatures"—those cherubic ministers—who "ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning." "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Put, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain, Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord."

In the accomplishment of any great event of Providence the power of the divine hand is manifest in proportion to the magnitude of the obstacles to be overcome. In the case of the Jews this consideration weighs in its utmost force. It is not a physical but a moral resistance that is to be encountered, and this affords to the reflecting mind a higher idea of the divine omnipotence than any miracle wrought by suspension of the laws which govern the natural world. What is the cleaving of a flood to the conquest of a rebellious spirit? What the bringing forth of water from the smitten rock, to the eliciting of penitential tears from the stubborn heart? The longer the Jews have withstood the evidences of the Gospel, the more confirmed must their prejudices have become; and the stronger their prejudices, the more signally is shown the truth and

reasonableness of that religion which finally subdues them and wins assent. To renounce convictions of long standing and of intense power—to confess that we and our fathers have been in error, and that of the grossest kind—to give up opinions long held in the highest veneration—to forsake the faith in which we have been nurtured from childhood, and embrace that against which we have earnestly contended—implies a triumph of truth which refers itself at once to the most glorious working of the right hand of the Most High. Such, we cannot doubt, will be the moral issue of the restoration of Israel, and in this result alone we find an ample solution of the problem which the prediction in itself may afford. Still we rest not the weight of our argument on the ends to be answered by the event, but upon the scriptural evidence of the fact.

VERSE XIII.

HEB.

וִידַעְתֶּם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה בְּפָתְחִי
אֶת־קִבְרוֹתֵיכֶם וּבְהַעֲלוֹתִי אֶתְכֶם
מִקִּבְרוֹתֵיכֶם עַמִּי׃

ENG. VERS.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι Κύριος ἐν τῷ ἀνοῖξαι με τοὺς τάφους ὑμῶν, τοῦ ἀναγαγεῖν με ἐκ τῶν τάφων τὸν λαόν μου.

ENG. VERS.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord, in my opening your tombs, for the sake of bringing up my people out of the tombs.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have opened your sepulchres, and shall have made you to come up out of the midst of your sepulchres, O my people.

VULG. VERS.

Et scietis quia ego Dominus, cum aperiero sepulchra vestra, et eduxero vos de tumulis vestris populo meus.

COMMENTARY.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. It is not perhaps possible to conceive a more triumphant demonstration that can be made of the divine perfections than that which shall accrue from the event here announced. It is virtually a declaration that Jehovah will make himself known in the glory of his power and the truth of his promises. The force of this convincing display shall fall in the first instance on the Jewish mind, but to them it will not be confined. All nations shall share with them in the effects of this overpowering conviction. Jer. 33. 9. "And it shall be to

me a name of joy, and a praise, and an honor, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear of all the good that I do unto them; and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I shall procure unto it." As it takes place in an age of the world when the human mind has reached a high degree of development and will be fully able to appreciate the weight of this kind of evidence, no deduction of science will carry with it more authority than that which attaches to the proof thus afforded of a stupendous divine interposition. God is known in all those striking occurrences which refer themselves directly to him as their true agent; and from repeated intimations in his word it would appear, that no order of events was ever designed to illustrate more signally the actings of Omnipotence than his dealings in the latter day with his own people. The language of the Psalmist in reference to a former event of the same character will be eminently applicable to this: Ps. 126. 1, 2, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them." In the following passages the allusion is direct to the effect here described: Ezek. 28. 25, 26, "Thus saith the Lord God; When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them: and they shall know that I am the Lord their God." Ezek. 34. 28, 30, "And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God." Ezek. 36. 23, 24, "And I will sanctify my great name which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land." So after the defeated invasion of Gog and Magog, Ezek. 38. 23, "Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord."

VERSE XIV.

HEB.

וְנָתַתִּי רוּחִי בָכֶם וְחִיִּיתֶם וְהִנַּחְתִּי
אֶתְכֶם עַל־אַדְמַתְכֶם וִידַעְתֶּם כִּי
אֲנִי יְהוָה דִּבַּרְתִּי וְעָשִׂיתִי נְאֻם־
יְהוָה׃

ENG. VERS.

And shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.

GR. OF LXX.

Καὶ δώσω πνεῦμα μου εἰς ὑμᾶς, καὶ ζήσεσθε, καὶ θήσομαι ὑμᾶς ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ὑμῶν, καὶ γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγὼ Κύριος· λελάληκα καὶ ποιήσω, λέγει Κύριος.

ENG. VERS.

And I will put my Spirit into you, and ye shall live, and I will place you upon your land, and ye shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken and will do (it), saith the Lord.

TARG. OF JONATHAN.

And I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will make you to dwell upon your land, and ye shall know that I have decreed it in my Word, and will confirm it, saith the Lord.

VULG. VERS.

Et dedero spiritum meum in vobis, et vexeritis, et requiescen vos facium super humum vestrum; et scietes quia ego Dominus locatus sum, et feci, ait Dominus Deus.

COMMENTARY.

And I shall put my Spirit into you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord. Heb. הִנַּחְתִּי *shall cause you to rest* in your own land; implying a tranquil and undisturbed possession, like that of Adam in Eden, to which the same term is applied, Gen. 2. 15: "And the Lord God took the man and *put him* (וַיַּנִּיחֵהוּ *made him to rest*) in the garden of Eden," &c. As the preparatory process of Israel's vivification is so strikingly analogous to that of Adam, the Spirit therefore has adopted the same term in reference to the subsequent allocation of each. The virtual language of the prediction to them in their captivity is that of Micah, 2. 10, "Arise ye, depart; for this is not your *rest*." The realized result of all that is here predicted will be little short of imparting a new sense to its favored subjects. Their eyes shall be opened to the recognition of a meaning in the inspired oracles which they had never before perceived, as it is intimated that they shall be no less impressed with the fact that God had *announced* the event, than that he had *accomplished* it. To their astonishment they will find themselves restored in exact accordance with their own prophecies, which, notwithstanding they had had them for ages in their hands, they had never hitherto fully understood. What a flood of light will then be poured upon their minds

from this source we may in some measure conceive. The inspired pages which contain these assurances for them, contain also the promise of various other connected results which suppose the Messiah to have come, and the Gospel to be true. This will bear with overwhelming effect upon their conversion. The veil of unbelief will be removed from their eyes, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced and mourn. "In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon." Nor let it be supposed that this transcendent token of favor will tend to beget and foster in the Jewish mind a proud, self-complacent, supercilious spirit at war with the humbling genius of the Gospel. They will find a sufficient antidote to this in the repeated assurance, "Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel." And again, "That ye may be ashamed and confounded and never lift up your face any more when I am pacified towards thee for all thy sins, saith the Lord." The memory of their past ingratitude and stubborn unbelief will chasten the consciousness of their present experience of the divine compassion, and weigh down the risings of unhallowed elation of spirit. Having much forgiven, they will love much, and true love cannot but be humble. As in the case of every individual penitent, the conviction that where sin has abounded, grace has much more abounded, always works the profoundest abasement of soul, so doubtless will it be in the case of the Jews as a people. Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall; my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me."

CONCLUSION.

We have thus endeavored to elicit the testimony of a very remarkable portion of the prophetic Scriptures, in favor of the position of the literal return of the Jews to the land of their fathers. We would fain believe that the argument has been conducted on the ground of a fair and unimpeachable exegesis of the sacred text. We are certainly unconscious of having done violence to the import of a single expression. That the vision of the prophet was intended to shadow forth an actual return of the chosen people from the land of their dispersion, is ascertained by the clearest declarations of Jehovah himself, who has vouchsafed the exposition of his own meaning. The only question of which the subject admits is, whether this return were the return from Babylon, or whether it is one that is yet future. On this head we are aware that it may not be

easy to preclude all doubt. So far as the present oracle alone is concerned, our proof is twofold; (1.) From the connexion of this chapter with the preceding, which may be shown beyond question to look to a future fulfilment; and (2.) From the symbolical endowment of the dry bones with life. This, we contend, is the adumbration of an effect to be produced upon the Jews *subsequent* to their restoration, and to be nothing more nor less than the mystic infusion into them of spiritual life by the quickening agency of the Holy Ghost, the only author of a new creation. It cannot, we think, be shown that any such result followed their restoration from the Babylonish captivity; and until it be clearly evinced that something was then wrought upon the nation at large corresponding to the significance of the symbols, we must feel constrained to adhere to our previous interpretation. The influence shadowed forth under the imagery of the vision, we are persuaded is the same with that announced in a large class of passages of which the following are specimens: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh." "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." "Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord." "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." This, if we mistake not, is merely the definition of that spiritual life with which, in answer to the fervent prayers of Christendom, the Jews are to be invested upon their restoration to the land of their longing. Nothing like it has yet occurred on the grand scale which is here announced.

But the truth is, the position which we maintain rests by no means upon the burden only of the present prophecy. Its announcements find an echo in hundreds of parallel Scriptures. The whole force of these predictions bears therefore directly in support of the prophetic thesis which we are here defending; so that if there be admitted to be a single announcement in the Scriptures of the literal restoration, the presumption is assuredly in favor of the view which we have taken of the scope of the present vision. Upon the distinct array and consideration of the multitudinous oracles touching this grand event, it is not the purpose of this essay to enter. We have merely selected one of a remarkable character, and aimed to present it in somewhat of its true import. It would be easy to confirm our exposition by a much more extended adduction of parallel passages. These we leave for others, or for ourselves on other occasions. Our purpose is answered by what we have already accomplished.

ADDENDUM—A.

DANIEL XII. 2.

HEB.

רַבִּים מִיְּשֵׁנֵי אַדְמַת־עָפָר יָקִיצוּ אֵלֶּה לְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם וְאֵלֶּה לַחֲרָפוֹת
לְדִרְאוֹן עוֹלָם׃

GR.

Καὶ πολλοὶ τῶν καθευδόντων ἐν γῆς χώματι ἐξεγερθήσονται, οὗτοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, καὶ οὗτοι εἰς ὀνειδισμὸν καὶ εἰς αἰσχύνην αἰώνιον.

ENG. VERS.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

On a somewhat closer view of this passage I am satisfied that the present rendering is inaccurate, and that the true version not only *admits*, but absolutely *requires*, the sense of a figurative instead of a literal resurrection. It will be observed that according to the established rendering the distinction of allotment is made *subsequent* to the awaking from the dust, and as this appears to find a parallel in our Saviour's words, John 5. 28, 29, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," it has been often regarded as announcing directly and primarily the fact of the future resurrection of the righteous and the wicked at the day of judgment, in accordance with the New Testament doctrine on that subject. There has indeed been a difficulty not easily surmounted in accounting for the introduction of this announcement in this particular connexion, as neither the preceding nor succeeding context would naturally suggest the idea that the prophet's disclosures had conducted us to the end of the present mundane dispensation. On the contrary, the more obvious impression we think would be, that the event here spoken of was intimately connected with that partial national deliverance announced in the preceding verse, where the standing up of Michael for Daniel's people is predicted, together with the deli-

verance of a remnant whose names were written in the book of the living. We confess indeed to the very great difficulty of assigning the precise period which the Spirit of prophecy had in view as the time of such unprecedented trouble and such a signal deliverance; but we are none the less certain, that the language employed in the present text is symbolical, and that some other than the final literal resurrection of the righteous and wicked dead is intended by it. The ground of this opinion is twofold:

(1.) The express declaration that not *all*, but *many*, of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. We are well aware that a multitude of high names may be adduced in support of the interpretation which makes *many* in this relation to be equivalent to *all*. But we fully accord with the remarks on this head of Dr. Hody in his Treatise on the Resurrection, who says: "I most fully acknowledge that the word *many* makes this text extremely difficult. I know what expositors say; but I am not satisfied with any thing that I have hitherto met with. Some tell us that *many* is sometimes used in the Scriptures to signify *all*:—but this does not clear the difficulty; for there is a great difference between *many* and *many of*. *All* they that sleep in the dust are *many;* but *many of* them that sleep in the dust cannot be said to be *all* they that sleep in the dust.—*Many of* does plainly except *some.*" Indeed, if the doctrine of the general resurrection were designed to be taught in this passage, the use of the limitary term *many* is utterly inexplicable. Why, upon an announcement of such transcend ent importance, should we be left to the possibility of mistake?

As to the theory of a *first*, or resurrection of the saints, in contradistinction to a *second*, or resurrection of the wicked, with an interval of a thousand years between them,—which some have proposed as a key to the solution of the difficulty, making this identical with the *first* resurrection—as we see for ourselves no evidence whatever of any such twofold resurrection, we wave all notice of it in this connexion. Until the main position is shown to be true, it is lost labor to attempt to disprove the application of a particular text in its support. As then the evidence seems decisive that the passage does not point to the general resurrection of all men at the last day, the conclusion is inevitable, that a symbolical and not a literal reviviscence is here intended. This is confirmed,

(2.) By a sound exegetical view of the prophet's language. This will be most adequately exhibited in a literal version of the text;—"And many of the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake—these to life everlasting, and those to shame and everlasting contempt." This will be seen at once to give an entirely new aspect to the passage. According to the established rendering, the distinction, so broadly conveyed, in the lot of the two classes is entirely

consequent upon their awaking from the dust. The one class awakes to life and honor, the other to shame and dishonor. Now this we affirm to be wholly unsustained by a fair construction of the original. According to that the distinction is between those who *awake to life*, and those who *do not awake at all.* In the outset *all* are represented as sleeping. Out of these *all* a portion (רַבִּים *many*) awake; the rest remain unawakened. This is the ground of the distinction. "These," i. e. the awakened, awake to everlasting life, "and those," i. e. the other class, who abide in the dust, who do not awake at all, remain subject to the shame and ignominy of that spiritual death which marked their previous condition. The "awaking" is evidently predicated of the "many," and not of the whole. Consequently the "these," in the one case, must be understood of the class that awakes, and the "those," in the other, of that which remains asleep. There is no ground whatever for the idea that the latter *awake* to shame and contempt. It is simply because they do *not* awake that this character pertains to them. The error in our translation has arisen from rendering the pronouns וְאֵלֶּה—אֵלֶּה by *some—and some*, instead of by *these—and those* referring respectively to subjects previously indicated. By the former method a distinction is constituted between those who *are awakened;* by the latter; between those who *are* and those who *are not* awakened. The difference is all important, and though the force of the criticism can be fully appreciated only by those who are conversant with the Hebrew, yet the common reader can scarcely fail to perceive from the following examples how strongly our interpretation is fortified by current usage when these words are taken distributively: Josh. 8. 22, "So they were in the midst of Israel—וְאֵלֶּה מִזֶּה אֵלֶּה מִזֶּה—*these on this side, and those on that side.*" 2 Sam. 2. 13, "And they sat down, *the one* (אֵלֶּה *these*) on the one side of the pool, *and the other* (וְאֵלֶּה *and those*) on the other side of the pool." 1 Kings, 20. 20, "And they pitched *one over against the other* (אֵלֶּה נֹכַח אֵלֶּה *these over against those*) seven days." In one single instance, and only one, in the whole Bible, do we find these terms used in a sense which affords countenance to the rendering in question. This is in Ps. 20. 7, "*Some* (אֵלֶּה *these*) trust in chariots, *and some* (וְאֵלֶּה *and those*) in horses: but we will remember," &c. The whole weight of authority is evidently in favor of the construction we have given to the phrase. The first denotes those who awoke, the second those who remained asleep. Life and glory crowned the first, shame and execration clothed the last. Thus understood the passage yields a clear and consistent sense, in which no violence is done to the phrase, *many of them that sleep.* Its restricted import is preserved, which is otherwise lost. Nor must we here omit to remark that the usage which obtains in regard to the Hebrew term קוּץ or יָקִץ

to awake, does not so well admit of its being taken, in such a figurative relation, in any but a good sense. The Psalmist says of himself, Ps. 17. 15, "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied *when I awake* (בְּהָקִיץ), with thy likeness." But while it appropriately expresses the awaking of the righteous to a beatified state, it is undoubtedly contrary to the genius of the word to apply it to any change or transition in the state of the wicked.

Nor can we here refrain from adducing again the strikingly parallel passage of Isaiah, ch. 26. 19 "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. *Awake* (הָקִיצוּ) and sing, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth her dead." These are doubtless the "many" of Daniel, for Gabriel, who is the speaker in this part of the book, tells the prophet that he will "show him that which is noted in the Scripture of truth," i. e. what is contained in the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets. Here, therefore, he gives an important item of his explanation by pointing to those who are to "awake" from the dust and sing. As for the rest, who did not enter into this number, they are undoubtedly designated in a preceding verse, Is. 26. 14: "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise; therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish." We should not be surprised if the progress of biblical investigation should yet establish the most intimate relation between these texts and that intensely mysterious portion of the Apocalypse which announces the spiritual quickening, in the first resurrection, of those saints who lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, and of "the rest of the dead who lived not (*οὐκ ἔζησαν*—erroneously rendered "lived not again") until the thousand years were finished;" or, rather, perhaps "as long as the thousand years were finishing," i. e. during the whole course of the millennium, without any implication that they *should* live when that period had expired.

It is moreover worthy of notice that the term here rendered *contempt* (דִּרָאוֹן) occurs only once elsewhere, under a slight change of form (דֵּרָאוֹן), and that is in Is. 66. 24, where it is applied to dead carcasses which are devoured by worms, and thence become an "*abhorring* (דֵּרָאוֹן) to all flesh," where the language is undoubtedly figurative, and points to a state of moral corruption and putridity characteristic of those who remained in an attitude of persevering transgression against God. As this passage throws light upon the use of the term as here employed, and strikingly confirms the above interpretation, so it becomes a question of deep exegetic import, whether both prophets do not in fact refer to precisely the same period of time, and set before us the same grand order of events. But upon this question our limits will not permit us here to enter.

The evidence is, on the whole, we think, decisive, that Daniel speaks of a *mystical* and not of a *literal* resurrection. It is the portraiture of the effects of a grand moral influence which is to be put forth upon a large body of *his* people; and *his* people are the Jews. But the drift of the symbolic visions of Ezekiel is to describe, as we have seen, the same result in regard to the same people. Why, then, shall we not regard these Scriptures as legitimately parallel in their scope, as we have intimated in our foregoing exposition?

ADDENDUM—B.

[As an apposite conclusion and crowning of the present expository essay, I have determined to append the following remarks on the closing chapters of Ezekiel, from a work on the "Second Advent," by the Rev. John Fry, Rector of Desford, Leicestershire, Eng.; published at London, 1822, in two vols. 8vo. The work is now of rare occurrence, and though devoted to the maintenance of the theory of the premillennial personal coming of Christ, from which I am forced entirely to dissent, yet it contains a large amount of valuable comment upon the prophetic Scriptures. With that portion of the work now subjoined which respects the final destiny of the Jews, I have no difficulty in according, except so far as it carries the implication of a *personal, visible, bodily* manifestation and reign of Christ on the earth, during the space of a thousand years, and in intimate connexion with the predicted ascendency and glory of restored Israel. For this general theory of interpretation I find no sufficient warrant in the oracles of God, and therefore am constrained to reject it altogether. As I interpret these oracles, they come much nearer to announcing an elevation and sublimation of the *natural* into the sphere of the *spiritual*, rather than a bringing down of the *spiritual* into the domain of the *natural*. While I anticipate, moreover, the most august developments of Providence on the field of human destiny, of which the dawnings may even now be perceived by the enlightened eye, I look with equal confidence for a *gradual* accomplishment of all the splendid purposes of Infinite Wisdom. Indeed, if there be any one principle of paramount importance to be established in connexion with the interpretation of prophecy, that principle I believe to be the *gradualism* of its fulfilment.]

General Remarks on the concluding Chapters of Ezekiel.

After the destruction of the last mortal foe of the Israelites, after their complete restoration, and after the outpouring of the Spirit upon them, we have a description, first, of a temple to be built, with certain regulations respecting the worship to be celebrated therein; and, next, of the city and territory which the worshippers of this temple possess.

I perceive nothing to render it doubtful, that the fulfilment of this prophecy is to be expected in the same order in which we find it placed in the vision before us, after the final restoration, and after the destruction of the last foe by the immediate hand of the great

Redeemer; not, as some have supposed, previously to these events, so as to be merely introductory to the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.*

It is a part, I conceive, of that grand final dispensation. It shows us what will be the situation of the Israelitish nation when restored to be the grand metropolitan nation of the renovated earth, under the reign of Christ and his saints. His dominion is to be bounded only by the extreme borders of the earth; but the seat of his kingdom is to be at Zion and Jerusalem. There he sits "upon the throne of his kingdom;" not so much, as we have had cause to reflect before, after the manner of an earthly monarch in his palace, but as the Elohim of Israel, enshrined in his sanctuary, according to the typical model exhibited in the ancient tabernacle which was pitched in the camp of Israel.

The THEOCRACY will be restored: "at Salem" will be his tabernacle—at Jerusalem, the "place of his feet," which he will "render glorious." Here a sanctuary and temple is to be built, not to receive, as Solomon's temple, the contents of "an earthly tabernacle of this building," but of that "made without hands, eternal in the heavens." Here the visible symbols of the divine presence are to be exhibited. Here the GOD-MAN is manifested—to anticipate the language of future oracles—coming "in the glory of His Father, and in His own glory, and the glory of His holy angels" He is still the Vicegerent of His Father. He "comes again with glory," yet still with delegated glory; every tongue is to confess him Lord to the glory of God the Father. But He comes also "with His own glory,"—the glory ordained Him as the first-born of every creature—the righteous and victorious Son of Man. But this glory he shares with all "the children of the resurrection," who "appear with him in glory," in such sort that the King of Saints is as "the first-born among many brethren." This part of the glory that is to be manifested, we have before considered as symbolized by the cherubim and seraphim, both as molten and wrought about the mercy-seat and tabernacle, and also as seen in the visions of the prophets, attendant on "a resemblance like the appearance of a man." Besides this glory, or these glories, is enumerated "the glory of the holy angels" They will be seen ascending and descending upon the Son of Man, "angels and principalities being made subject to him" in his capacity of King of Saints. How these glories are particularly manifested in the holy mountain of Jehovah's house, or in what manner Christ and His saints will govern the nations upon earth, "reigning from Jerusalem to the end of earth," we can, perhaps, have no very adequate idea at

* See the interesting work of Mr. Pirie on the Restoration of Israel.

present. But it cannot be doubted, that these prophetic visions, in connection with other Scriptural prophecies, are designed to give to the waiting people of God some general notion and outline of what is to come to pass hereafter.

It cannot, again, be doubted, but that we are to interpret these visions now before us in analogy with other prophecies. They are not to be interpreted "privately," as a part of Scripture standing alone, but as forming part of the system of prophetic revelation, which is designed, by little and little, to manifest to mankind, as the appointed time draws near, what God is about to do in the great day of his power and kingdom. The comparison of other prophecies must, therefore, be our chief guide to the interpretation of this. And, especially, those prophecies that have been fulfilled must teach us, in the event foretold compared with the language and symbols of the predictions, how far we are to expect a substantial and literal fulfilment, and how much we may venture to attribute to metaphor and figure.

By this rule of interpretation, I am led to conclude, that we are to expect a very substantial, and a very literal fulfilment of the vision before us. Those parts of prophecy that have been fulfilled, which foretold the present situation of Israel, and of their country, have been very substantially, and very literally fulfilled.—Why, therefore, should we doubt the exactness of the part of the vision as yet unfulfilled, which speaks of God's future bounties to his people, and to his land? Those parts of prophecy which describe the humiliation and passion of the Son of God, have also been most substantially and most literally fulfilled, down indeed to the minutest circumstances pointed out in the language of the ancient prophets:—even predictions, which before they came to pass, when interpreted literally, seemed in the estimation of the masters of Israel, and of the disciples of Jesus, too, very improbable, very unlikely to happen to "the Christ of God," very unsuitable, according to their conceptions, to the future kingdom and glory of the Messiah. If, however, we are careful not to interpret of the first advent any Scriptures but such as clearly belong to it, how little was there of metaphor and figure, except what is usual in the most exact and perspicuous style!

These are the reasons which weigh in my mind to understand what follows literally, and to expect an exact fulfilment of every circumstance detailed; though, perhaps, the suitableness, and the spiritual importance of some things related, may not appear to us who "see through a glass darkly," or may seem inadequate to our expectations of the glories of Messiah's reign. We see not the reason, nor the design, nor the future bearings, it may be, of what we object to; and, therefore, are ready like Peter, on a similar

occasion, to reject the notion with disdain, as unworthy of God. But it surely becomes us to suspend our judgment in these cases till more fully informed, and not to be "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written."

One thing we should bear in mind; the vision which follows does not show us the glorious majesty and circumstance of the church triumphant,—of that "new Jerusalem which descends from God out of heaven," the residence of glorified spirits, who reign paramount over the nations upon earth, "kings," and "priests of God and of Christ." But we have here a prophetic description of the situation of one of these nations on the earth—of men in "flesh and blood," "inhabiting houses of clay." The description is that of the most favored nation, the remnant of Israel, restored to the land of Canaan, made the leading nation upon earth; and in some sort, as it should seem, the link of communication between mortal man in the flesh, and the "holy myriads" of glorified spirits that come with the Lord from heaven, and reign with him upon earth.

We have already met with prophecies that have plainly told us of the restoration of the sanctuary and temple at Jerusalem, the re-organization of their priesthood, and Levitical ministry, "to keep the charge of the house," and to perform the rites of an appointed ceremonial.—Jer. xxxiii. 21, &c.; Ezek. xx. 40, &c.; xxvii. 26, &c. We have been told, that the remnants of other nations, which shall survive the destructions of the latter days, will be partakers in the rites and solemnities of this new temple, and go up thither to worship; and that some of them will be admitted into the priesthood of the sons of Aaron, and permitted to discharge the functions of the Levitical ministry.—Isaiah lxvi. 21. We have been told, notwithstanding, that Israel, from its situation, and from the particular blessings of their fathers' God, will have a vast pre-eminence over the other nations, and hold a sacred character among them.—Isaiah lxi. 6. All this we have already learned from former oracles. The vision of Ezekiel, on which we are now engaged, only goes more into detail on the circumstances of this restored Israel, their temple, their city, and their land.

The use which God hath made of this people, and of this country, in the present world, in providing for the redemption and gathering of the chosen remnant which are predestined to reign in glory with Christ "in the world to come," is extraordinary and wonderful! So, it seems, the use he will make of them, "in the world to come of which we speak," in regard to the whole mass of mankind, under the spiritual rule of Christ and his saints, will be extraordinary and wonderful too! God has made of the spiritual children of Abraham—the heirs of promise, who with *the Seed* are to be heirs of the world—a great people like the stars of heaven for

A sketch of
THE HOLY LAND
In illustration of Ezekiel XLVIII

SHOWING THE DIVISION AMONG THE TRIBES RESTORED.

multitude; but he has promised besides, "In thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed;" this will also come to pass in its season.

New Division of the Holy Land.—Ezek. xlv. and xlviii.

In this division of the country, so different from any former division, six tribes are stationed in the north, and six tribes to the south of an OFFERING of land, containing a square of twenty-five thousand reeds, lying in the midst. In the midst of this OFFERING, we are told, the Sanctuary is placed. From an inspection of the forty-eighth chapter, it will be evident that all the portions, both for the tribes and for "THE OFFERING," are measured straight across, from east to west, from the Mediterranean to the river Jordan and its lakes. The former possessions of the two tribes and a half beyond the Jordan are not mentioned: all the tribes have an allotment in the original land of Canaan. Now, if we measure in breadth from north to south, making Jerusalem the middle point, twenty-five thousand reeds, we shall find the boundary-lines will pass from east to west somewhere above the latitude of Joppa, or Jaffa, on the north, and somewhere below the latitude of Hebron on the south: within these lines is "THE OFFERING," in breadth about forty miles, and varying in its length, according to the line of the Mediterranean coast on the one side, and that of the Dead Sea, with the course of the Jordan, on the other. All the country to the north will be occupied by the six tribes, Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, and Judah. What is the breadth of their respective portions we are not told, only that they extend in length from Jordan to the sea, and Judah's allotment is next to "the offering."—Chap. xlviii. 1—7.

The south of the offering is to be occupied in the same manner by Benjamin, Simeon, Isaachar, Zebulun, and Gad.—Ver. 23–28. The great "OFFERING" of land, then, which we are more particularly to consider, lies between the latitudes of Jaffa and Hebron, or latitudes to be taken some miles more to the north and south.

And here a remarkable coincidence must be pointed out. We learn from the prophecy of Zechariah, chapter 14: 10, that "all the land was to be turned into a plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem." Now, it will be found, Geba is on the same parallel of latitude with Jaffa, and on the parallel of Hebron is Eremmon, which is no doubt, "Rimmon, south of Jerusalem." Both are about the same distance from Jerusalem, north and south, and both are in the middle point of the parallel of latitude, between east and west,

showing clearly that the plain will nearly fill the whole space of the OFFERING. It should seem, then, that all, or nearly all, this country included between these parallels of latitude and the seas on either side, is to be turned into a plain, in the midst of which "the mountain of the Lord's house" is elevated to contain the temple. This new formed plain and "OFFERING" of land contains, as we shall see, besides the square mile for the temple, a measured portion of land for the priests, another for the Levites, and another for the city and its suburbs. Here, too, are assigned the lands which are to support the dignity of the prince and his family.

It will be surely most interesting, as far as we are able, to trace the different sites and respective proportions of these allotments, which are to support the establishment of that future THEOCRACY, the site of which God will establish in the land of Israel, and the dominion of which will be extended over all the earth. In the general division of the land, chapter forty-eighth, five and twenty thousand reeds in breadth were to be measured off: the *breadth*, as we saw, was from north to south: the *length* of the different portions was counted from east to to west. In length the OFFERING was to be as one of the other portions, viz. it was to go "from the great sea, westward, to the Jordan, or Dead Sea, eastward." All this OFFERING--or portion of land, dedicated to public purposes--is not, however, taken to form the HOLY OBLATION; but the HOLY OBLATION, including the portion for the city, was to be made four-square—in length and breadth about forty miles.—Chap. xlv. 1; xlviii. 20.

To what use the complements of the figure originally marked off for "THE OFFERING" are to be applied, we shall see presently; for a complement, it is evident by inspection, remains on each side, of irregular width, facing the Mediterranean on the west, and the Sea of Sodom and mouth of the Jordan on the east.

But it appears, from an inspection of the map, that a regular square of forty miles could not stand in this part of the Holy Land, on account of the relative position of the Mediterranean and Dead Seas; we must, therefore, form a figure of four equal sides, accommodated to the line of coasts on either side, which, in their general direction, may be said to be parallel to each other. Having formed our four equal-sided figure, or parallelogram, as the direction of the country permits, each side about forty miles, so as to have Jerusalem in the midst, that is, midway between north and south, for midway between east and west it is not situated, and in what follows, is described as not being so situated.

In this sacred square, we are next to measure off a portion of twenty-five thousand reeds in length, and ten thousand in breadth, for "the most holy place." The length of the portions, observe, *within* the square, is to be counted from north to south, as is ex-

pressly said in chapter xlviii. 10. Unless this was the case, indeed, the most holy portion could not include the Sanctuary, which it is said to do, because the holy mountain of Zion is about twenty miles, both from the north and from the south of the boundary lines; and, for the same reason, we must begin to measure *from* the east. Taking, therefore, two-fifths of the breadth of the square, from east to west, for "the most holy place," which is to be the "possession of the priests," including the Sanctuary, we are again to take two-fifths more, next to the portion of the priests, for the Levites, and the remaining fifth, towards the west of the square, is to be for the city and its possessions.—Chap. xlviii. 15.

The city is described as lying in the midst of this last division, which will fix its situation somewhere about twenty miles west of the Sanctuary, or of the spot where Jerusalem now stands, towards the Mediterranean sea. The city itself, according to the most probable computation of the measures given, occupies a square of about eight miles: the rest of this last division is assigned for the support of the city, as though it were its public property:—"And the increase thereof shall be for food unto them that serve the city, and they that serve the city shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel." Lastly; When we have formed our square, or parallelogram, of the requisite dimensions, and it appears to be as large as any four equal-sided figure can be formed in this part of the country, we shall still have, as was observed, very considerable districts of land, both on the west, along the shores of the Mediterranean, and on the east, along those of the Dead Sea and the stream of Jordan. These two portions, making up, with the OBLATION, the whole "OFFERING of land," are for the prince, and for the support of his family, his state and government (chap. xlv. 7, &c.): we cannot say of his regal dignity, for king he is not. The Elohim is King, even Jehovah in his holy sanctuary. But, notwithstanding, the prince is highly distinguished among his fellow subjects, at whose head he is. His estates must be very large; probably nearly equal to the possession of any single tribe. The Levites, too, it appears, are no longer dispersed as wanderers over the country, but have a full portion in the midst of the land. And the priests, which are to be all of one family, of the family of Zadoc,—all the other families of the sons of Aaron, it may be, having become extinct,—are to possess a district of country equal to the whole tribe of Levi, and, probably, greater than any one of the tribes besides. This will give us some idea of the greatness of the religious establishment of the Israelitish nation in "this world to come." Indeed, the whole nation seems to be distributed, as well as the priests and Levites, in subserviency to the support of this Sanctuary and THEOCRACY; and with relation to the rest of the world, appear to have all a holy,

ministerial character, while they dwell on one side or other of the Holy Place in their respective allotments; or when they go to "do the service of the city," whatever is intended by that expression. And as former prophecies have seemed to declare, while this favored nation has the charge of the sanctuary, and is employed in its services, the whole world is brought willingly to contribute to their support, to their comfort, and glory. This representation will much illustrate former prophecies:—

> And the strangers shall stand and feed your flocks,
> And the sons of the alien shall be your husbandmen and vine-dressers;
>
> But ye shall be called the priests of Jehovah,
> Ministers of our Elohim shall they call you.
>
> Ye shall consume the wealth of the nations,
> And shall have command over their honors.

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